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WILHELMINA

PRINCESS OF THE NETHERLANDS



Lonely
but not
Alone

LONELY BUT NOT ALONE

*by Her Royal Highness,
PRINCESS WILHELMINA
of the Netherlands*

This personal story of Her Highness Princess Wilhelmina, who for fifty years was Queen of the Netherlands, has been acclaimed as one of the most inspiring and moving documents ever written by royalty.

Lonely But Not Alone tells of Princess Wilhelmina's deep and abiding religious faith, and the effects of God's guidance in all great events of her life. Magnificently detailed and completely informal in style, the book is not primarily intended as history, but rather as the rich spiritual adventure of a great and beloved woman whose destiny—and whose faith—were to carry her through two of the most harrowing world conflicts of all times.

With poignant detail, she describes her parents and her youth amid the splendor of court life in the Hague. She writes about her first years as Queen in the

(continued on back flap)

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LONELY BUT NOT ALONE



Ed Suister, Amsterdam

William the Silent (Bust at Het Loo)

H.R.H. WILHELMINA
PRINCESS
OF THE NETHERLANDS

Lonely But Not Alone

Translated from the Dutch by

JOHN PEEREBOOM

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Introduction

TO THE ENGLISH TRANSLATION

This book was written exclusively for my countrymen, both in our homeland and abroad. You might compare it with a long intimate letter to the Dutch people as members of one big family, with many years' experience in common. The reactions I received proved unmistakably that my countrymen understood it in this way.

Last October I was astonished to receive requests from publishers in different countries who proposed to translate and publish my book.

You will realize that I needed a long time to consider my answer. However, in Chapter 5 you can read how I became a world citizen in the spiritual sense (and in the preceding chapters I have tried to make clear the underlying concept of universal Christianity). This conviction prompted me to give my consent.

I trust the foreign reader will realize that this book was never intended to become a part of world literature.

Wilhelmine

Acknowledgments

I am deeply indebted to Mr Th. Booy, author and friend of our language, for his help and co-operation in the preparation of this book.

While working on my manuscript I discovered that setting down one's thoughts and memories is by no means the same thing as writing a book. This latter task had never been imposed on me before. No one knows better than I how much time, devotion, accuracy and professional knowledge Mr Booy has given to this book.

I also want to express my gratitude to Mrs S. E. Booy (*née* Baroness van Randwijck), whose help has been invaluable in the discussions concerning this book.

Further thanks are due to Mr B. Bolt, who looked up a number of details for me.

Finally I want to thank Miss T. H. Meijer for all the typing she has done for me.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, which appears to read 'W. H. Meijer', is written over a single horizontal line.

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Introduction

As I was about to write this introduction I heard our Queen's Christmas speech of 1951. There I found expressed, in a single short sentence, the fundamental thought of this book. She says: 'Thus our fatherland, risen from the eternal sea, has become itself under God's Guidance.'

Under God's Guidance.

Not a mass product, but a people, a personality; developing gradually, grown into what it is now.

His will is accomplished by the hands of men. Thus our fatherland has become itself.

I DEDICATE THIS BOOK
TO THE FATHER OF THE FATHERLAND
AND TO MY DAUGHTER QUEEN JULIANA

To the father of the fatherland for what he did as a servant of God and country.

There are times when we feel that everything has got out of hand and that it cannot go on like this; that is to say, that history has come into a decisive phase. It is remarkable how

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in the course of history it is precisely at those moments that personalities arise who speak the word and perform the deed or deeds that release us; who guide the destiny of nations into new channels. Beyond existing ideas and circumstances of the moment, these exceptionally clear-eyed and perceptive men discover the image of the future. From their minds spring ideas which will prove to be well in advance of their time. By proclaiming these, and by leading the way in their application, they take the first steps on the road that leads to their realization. This cannot be explained as the result of fortuitous circumstance. It is the will of that higher Wisdom which, even though the people who make history do not realize it, directs the course of events through the agency of those it sends to execute the Divine Ordinance.

The acts of such people mark the course of history, and they retain their meaning in the present and in the future. If I hope to have your agreement with this thought it is not just a matter of polite approval or recognition of its truth. I am thinking of something different, something sacred: the discovery and consciousness of that Guidance itself.

One of those who learnt to see the future in this light and to understand it is the man who suddenly appeared when our fatherland had to live through the anxious hours of its birth. Who guided it through the storms of his time. He knew that he was called to assist in building the future, in obedience to that Wisdom. And he was Silent because he knew this.

He saw in his mind's eye Justice and Liberty for nations and individuals before they existed. Liberty of conscience, liberty to serve God as one feels it should be done, equally for all according to their own conviction. This idea lived as a reality in his heart and mind. Struggling against spiritual forces of superior power, politically as well as militarily and economically, he was supported by a small and impoverished people, but a people ready for all sacrifices because it had lost its rights and liberties through the tyranny of a merciless oppressor. To attain his goal William of Orange had only a handful of soldiers at his disposal. '*Nul n'est besoin d'espérer pour entreprendre, ni de réussir pour persévérer.*' 'My heart has remained constant in adversity.' Having determined on his attitude to

life and his policy, he stood by his resolution. Someone has said of him: 'He walked as if he saw the Unseen.'

His vision is and remains the test whereby the purity of principles and human motives can be judged. The work he began is still going on, far beyond our frontiers. Our people and the father of the fatherland together have made our country the cradle of Liberty; it was in their day the hope and refuge of all the oppressed and the persecuted.

Dedicated to my child, our Queen Juliana.

She bears the name of the mother of the founder of our independence, who fostered in her son the qualities that gave him, in spite of his political education at the Machiavellistic court of Charles V, a clear insight into the impure motives and considerations that often determine politics; so that he rejected and abjured them once and for all, in order to follow the voice of his conscience in all the decisions he took, and to be guided not by men and their motives, but by God only. Juliana von Stolberg observed this line of conduct all her life, and impressed it deeply upon the hearts of her children. For many of her contemporaries she was an example of higher wisdom and inner strength.

I detect in the older Juliana qualities that I find again in the younger woman. For me the two Julianas are intimately related.

May God continue to bless this life and to make it a beacon whence His light shines over the dark waves for those who navigate upon the seas of life.

The reader should not expect to find here a political or an historical account or an autobiography. Such works are concerned with other aspects of life. I shall invite the reader to follow me on a higher plane.

The subject of this book is God's Guidance of our people in past, present and future.

Having been involved in that to a certain extent during my reign, I want to try and describe in this book His presence in my life. In His Guidance was the essential bond between our people and me. The unity of the Dutch people, the father of

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the fatherland and myself originates in a common faith in the Guidance which brings our life to its destination.

Let me say in advance that I shall try to see my life and work as those of another person whose inner motives I know. In this way I hope to present as objective as possible a picture. The main thing is that it should be true to life. Thus only can it come up to the requirements of the high purpose of this book.

Everything I describe happened in the most ordinary and prosaic way in real life. As long as we are 'earthly vessels' this is only natural.

Things seen as coming from God demand no human adornment and even reject it. They come straight at us as we are, and lift us up.

We could hardly fail to notice how in some situations circumstances and events fit together like a masterly jig-saw puzzle, and finally combine to form an impressive whole. It is then that we realize how far such compositions exceed our human capacities.

On the other hand life can at times be utterly incomprehensible, and demand a great deal of patience if we want to detect God's hand in it. I myself am convinced that it is never absent, even though hidden in the destiny of nations as well as of individuals.

God's inscrutability need not surprise us as long, I repeat, as our minds are contained in earthly vessels. When we evoke the total image however we can find His Guidance and follow it. Those who have discovered Christ's Guidance learn to see it more and more clearly.

Just as in nature everything develops and grows, so it was with my experience of the consciousness of higher Guidance in my life. In the end, this consciousness dominated my whole personality and determined my actions. In it I found the strength and wisdom for the accomplishment of my task and my calling towards my countrymen.



Kameke, The Hague

With Father

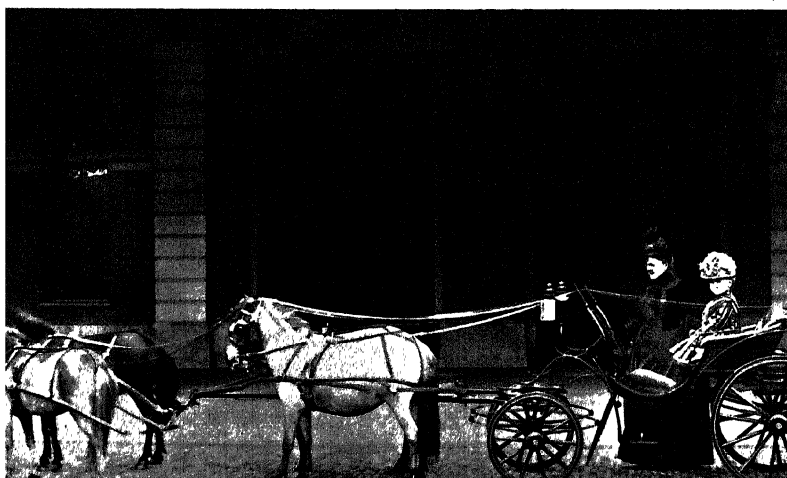


Kameke,

With Mother

In the pony-carriage with Mother

Kameke, 2





Kameke, The Hague

Queen Wilhelmina, 1896

1. *Father and Mother*

FATHER

LET ME BEGIN by saying that I still possess my father's walking-stick, with which I was always allowed to play when we went out for a stroll—if the word is not too strong for the uncertain steps of a child at the age of three or four.

Nowadays Marijke plays with his fine set of dominoes, which I hold in high honour, in the same room and in the same place where we used to play together. At first we built primitive edifices with the pieces; later, as my intelligence matured, we laid them according to the rules of the game.

What a joy it was when we played with his large zinc bathtub, which had taps for hot and cold water, a marvel in those days. We made boats out of the paper on his desk and floated them in the tub.

I had my daily hour of play with Father; I seem to remember that it began at five o'clock. I was dressed in a beautiful sleeveless open-necked frock, with a wide sash of the same colour as the bows on my shoulders. Once dressed, I was taken to my father's study by way of the main staircase and the big drawing-room; and then the fun started!

I can hardly remember him on horseback; only once did I see him ride out, on a very big black horse called Pantalon.

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Father was very tall and strongly built. I also retain the image of an occasion when he went out shooting with the sleighs on a day of splendid snow. There is often more snow here in the east of the country than in the west. At times Mother and I went out in her lovely little sleigh; what a joy that was! On such occasions we were huddled up in the fur coats Father had given us, exactly similar except of course for size.

Long before I can remember a little chalet had been built for me in the park. Near it I had a dovecot, a duck-pond, a swing and a seesaw, and a pump. I kept rabbits and chickens, and there was also my donkey, Grisette, which I often rode. For several years I had one or more children as playmates. I remember how we used to gambol along the paths of the park.

In the Koningslaan there was the deer-park, with its fallow-deer who ate out of one's hand; they came to get their oats out of feeding-troughs when they were called by the horn-signal of old Peters, who looked after the hounds as well as the deer. Sometimes I took these dogs for a walk; and of course when they had a litter of puppies they were the centre of my interest.

The gamekeeper, Peters, who always accompanied my father when he went out shooting, lived in the Koningslaan. It was not only Peters who was important to us, but his family as well. We often visited them in their home; there were children of my own age, who played with me.

They were patriarchal days on the Veluwe.¹ There were a number of old families who had worked for us from time immemorial. This created a special tie and special relations between their members and us of the Orange family.

The old gunmaker Overdijking also played an important part in my early youth, for when there was something wrong with one of my toys he acted as the good 'fairy' who mended it. The number of monkeys and clowns and such he turned into musicians once again!

Nor should I forget Kraaijenbrink the old gardener; with whom Father discussed all matters concerning flowers and

¹ Region in the province of Gelderland where the palace of Het Loo is situated.

plants, for he was very fond of the garden. For my garden too—I had a little plot of my own—he ordered all the flowering plants, including two borders full of *Perle d'Or* dwarf roses along the path that cut through it. The hot-houses also received his attention; he gave Mother a great many exotic plants of various kinds.

Mother saw to it that I should provide flowers for Father's study the whole year round. I had to pick them and to arrange them. How he used to love his flowers! Of course Mother also received her share.

My first pony-carriage, in which we drove through the park, I can hardly remember, but on the other hand I have a very vivid recollection of my wild joy and excitement at the prospect of the Shetland ponies. One day in late autumn Father suddenly announced that I was going to have them, no less than four in number. At last they were to arrive. It was already dark when Mother and I went out to meet them, listening intently for the sound of their hooves on the road. What a long time it seemed! Finally they came. They were taken straight to the stables, where a warm bed of straw was awaiting them. Next day I had to give them names. The roan I called Brownie, the black-headed one Puck, the black was to be known as Blackie and his friend the bay became Baby. Baby was my first riding-horse. He lived to an advanced age. I was given a wicker carriage (an imitation wicker carriage, in the old shape and with the old basket design painted on it), to which these new friends were harnessed.

When I was about sixteen I was taught by our old coachman to drive them four-in-hand; this new art I later applied to a four-in-hand of full-sized horses Mother had given me. Baby always accompanied us on our walks, as Grisette had done before; when I became tired I was put on his back and practised a little trot or gallop, with the man walking beside.

At the same time I received riding lessons in the outdoor riding-school. When that became too monotonous, one of the gentlemen of the entourage accompanied me on that old giant Pantalón (my father's last riding-horse); he held my mount by the leading-rein but Baby, who was not devoid of a

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sense of humour, manœuvred in such a way that he and his rider passed back and forth under Pantalon's head all the time. This made the leading-rein completely useless and a cob had to be bought who could not play at this game.

While my father still enjoyed good health, we moved about fairly frequently. Between Christmas and New Year the household was transferred to The Hague, where we stayed until a few weeks after Easter, and then went to Amsterdam for the official six-day visit. After that we returned to Het Loo, where our stay was interrupted by a journey to Arolsen, the home of my grandparents, who usually organized a family reunion in which the children took part. After this visit Father left us to go and take the waters. Sometimes Mother went too, but for a different cure. A little pleasure trip concluded this period. We then returned to Het Loo till the middle of September, when we went to The Hague for the opening of the States-General; then we went back to Het Loo, where we enjoyed the autumn which can be so magnificent there with its bracing air and splendid colours.

The idea of going up and down for the day had not yet come to be accepted at that time; once installed in one place we stayed there until the time came for the next part of the annual programme. Travel on the whole was by train, but this required far more time and preparation than it does now. When it was a matter of making a return trip in a single day we were not deterred by the prospect of long hours in a carriage. The carriages were well appointed, but they were no longer the old travelling-coaches. I remember a trip from Het Loo to Arnhem and back and another from Het Loo to Oranje-Nassau's Oord. When my father's mother was still alive he must occasionally have gone to Soestdijk, where she lived, and have returned after dinner, halting twice on the way. He went with the four-in-hand, at a gallop. It took my husband and me about four hours with his greys at a quick trot, halting once.

From the late 'eighties I remember seeing my first velocipede when I was driving along the road with Mother. One huge wheel with a tiny one behind it.

Shortly before his seventieth birthday on the 19th of February 1887 my father fell ill, and he could not attend the birthday celebrations. Mother and I replaced him. It was on that day, after a festive drive through The Hague and Scheveningen, that our horses bolted and ran all the way from the old turnpike on the road to Scheveningen to the palace in the Noordeinde, where the crowds barred the way.

The single postilion who was driving the horses was the first to lose heart; he let himself fall off his horse. The two grooms soon followed suit, and there were Mother and I racing along by ourselves, and not a chance of seizing the reins.

There was general consternation. Mother was simply wonderful, and equally admirable when she had to tell Father about it, but I was less heroic and at first it seemed impossible to persuade me to go out again in the evening—although this time we were to have two postilions and four horses for greater safety—however urgently necessary it was to convince anxious mankind that neither Mother nor I were hurt. At last I gave in, because I did not want to leave Mother alone in this enterprise that I considered dangerous. So that evening we went out to see the illumination and a display of thunderous fireworks.

Fortunately Father's illness was not yet continuous. The normal programme, with its annual visits, the journey and the cure, could still be completed that year. The first half of 1888 also passed off as usual, but owing to a deterioration in Father's condition the return to The Hague at the end of the year could not take place.

There was no improvement in his condition until the spring of 1889, and there could be no celebrations for the fortieth anniversary of his reign in March; the flags were brought out only on the fortieth anniversary of his installation.

During these last few years Father hardly ever left the house. I remember his last walk, when he was so weak that he could go no further than one of the copper beeches on the way to the chalet. He sat down on one of the chairs there and for a

while talked with one of his gentlemen. I do not remember if this was 1889 or 1890.

When the improvement in his condition allowed Mother to leave him for a short period, and to take a little rest from her exhausting work as a nurse, she took me on a ten days' visit to Segenhaus, a small country-house in the mountains near Neuwied on the Rhine, where we were the guests of her mother's sister, my Great-Aunt Marie.

During the winter of 1890 Father was better. On the 19th of February he gave a large dinner-party at Het Loo. All the guests came and left by special train. What an event this was in our quiet life of those years! I was allowed to attend the beginning of the dinner. It was to be Father's last public appearance.

The following summer he was relatively well. Mother could go to Nijmegen for the historical pageant of Leyden undergraduates, which took place in the Valkhof. Under a great arch the Emperor Charles V received the homage of the nobles. Of course the splendid costumes made a considerable impression on me as a child.

Mother also went to Arnhem on an official visit, and took me.

In August Father's condition took a turn for the worse and the winter of eighty-nine repeated itself in a graver form. Once again the Council of State had to exercise Royal Authority. On expiry of the constitutional term, the States-General passed a law appointing Mother as Regent. She was sworn in by their meeting of the 20th of November. I remember vividly how difficult it was for her to leave Father's sick-bed for the ceremony. To leave him and go to The Hague when he was so ill and helpless! I shared her feelings intensely.

During the time of his suffering Mother and I were never out of his thoughts and as soon as he was a little better he invented all sorts of things to please us. We received splendid costly presents.

One of the ideas of his last years was to have my chalet enlarged and a kitchen installed. When the rebuilding was done he was still there to see it, and in the summer of 1890

he could choose the dinner-service. But when the work was completed he had passed away.

What pleasant hours I have spent there cooking! And the same goes for my child and grandchildren. Thanks to Mother a covered balcony was added on the first floor, with a beautiful design painted on the walls and an old door with a knocker.

Of course my daily hour of play with Father had to be given up, but he sent for me as often as possible, to hear what I was doing downstairs, and sometimes he could still enter fully into my interests.

Although during the last few months his suffering was such that I could no longer visit him, this period left a deep mark on my life. The atmosphere at Het Loo was dominated by his illness. Everything became strained. When his illness was at its worst Mother spent all her time at his bedside and I hardly saw her. How much it means to a child when her mother disappears out of her life, and for such a long time!

The last night she did not come to bed at all—I had been sleeping in her room for some time—and that night I felt that something terrible was happening upstairs in Father's room. People tried to hide it from me, but yet I knew what that terrible thing was.

When all was over Mother came to my bed and, deeply moved, told me that Father had died.

From that moment many things changed, particularly in my own life. My undisturbed playing had come to an end; I had to be present all the time when Mother received people who came to offer their condolences.

And that deathly silence everywhere, and the closed shutters, all those black figures with long veils, in the house too, and, worst of all, Mother so sad and wrapped in such a terrifying lot of crape! It was much more than I could bear.

There was a biting frost; the guard of honour in front of the palace had to be relieved every hour, because no human being could stay motionless in the cold any longer than that.

Then there was the journey to The Hague in the train with all the blinds drawn. The tolling of the bells at the arrival of the coffin, and on the day of the funeral, upset me completely.

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The idea was that I should accompany Father's coffin as far as the front door. For this purpose I had to wear a crape hat with a veil to cover my face. This prospect was so frightening that my nerves collapsed. I had to stay in bed with a headache and a stomach-ache.

How upset I was by my experiences, all the more deeply perhaps because I could not express myself at that age, was proved by the measuring-stick, which indicated no growth at all in the first few months after Father's death, although before and after I grew regularly.

It would evidently be impossible for me to describe Father's character, still less could I give an idea of his inner motives. At the age I was then I could not have acquired an insight into these things. I only know in the most general sense that I resemble him in many respects, but anything more precise could only be guesswork.

After the funeral Mother was sworn in as Regent for me. An attempt was made to persuade me to accompany her to her carriage, but, even though no veil was required this time, I could not face it. It was another heavy task for her, all alone.

I saw Mother more often now, although much of her time was taken up by her new duties. She made it clear to me that she took them very seriously. In this connection I should mention a conversation I had with her in the weeks following Father's death. Not knowing how to express myself—I was only ten years old—I was worried by the thought of my future and wondered what form my task would take and what my responsibilities would be.

I absolutely had to have a clearer notion of these things; I *had* to know when my task would begin and how I could ever grow up soon enough. Without that I could find no peace. I pulled myself together and put my problems before Mother. We had a long and deeply serious talk about them. I was struck with awe at the thought that only eight years would have to suffice for me to become grown up and wise and sensible, and I saw that there was no time to be lost. I resolved and promised Mother to work as hard as I could, unremittingly. How far beyond my reach seemed the day when I

would be a 'big person' and so clever that I could take all those decisions. . . .

In those sad days Mother taught me:

Jesus lives and we with Him,
Death, where are thy terrors now?
Jesus lives and His voice
Will call us back to life,
Will one day clothe us with honour,
This alone is our consolation.

Jesus lives, 'tis certain,
Wherever our path may lead,
Not even a power of darkness
Will separate us from Jesus:
To be upheld by His force
This alone is our consolation.

Jesus lives, and henceforth death
Is but the gate of life,
What calm in our agony
This word will give our heart:
'Thou, O Saviour, Thou alone,
Thou art our consolation.'

MOTHER

So many excellent things have been written about her already that it is difficult to say anything new. I have been glancing through the books written about her or in which she plays an important part, and have been impressed by the many-sided picture they gave of her. Most of these accounts, not surprisingly, begin with her marriage to Father; sometimes they go a little further back, into the preceding months when she acquired a profound practical knowledge of her new people and country and learned the Dutch language. Her teacher was Mr Beynen, whom I remember well from my

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earliest years. Mother kept up friendly relations with him until his death.

Nowhere do I find anything about her youth, and I do not know much about it myself. She seldom spoke about it. Her parental home could certainly be called enlightened, particularly when one considers the fact that the smaller German courts in those days were half a century or more behind the rest of society. This home was in advance of its time. Grandfather was very well read, and with all her gifts Grandmother would certainly have been suited to a greater task in larger surroundings. She showed devotion and imagination in fulfilling her duties towards her people in Waldeck. While her health permitted, her active influence was felt in everything.

She took a strong interest in the education of her children, who had their lessons at home. Owing to circumstances my grandparents travelled frequently. They were always accompanied by a tutor and a governess. Quite often the journeys lasted several months and led through different countries. With all their travels, and with parents who regularly met and received interesting people, the children's human and intellectual development was really exceptionally favoured.

Apart from their schooling by different tutors and governesses, the children also attended courses and did a great deal of independent reading. All were marked by this education and benefited from it later on. Meeting any one of them, one was invariably struck by their culture and general knowledge.

The daughters had widely different talents; one was distinguished by erudition and a gift for science, another had a clear mind and great practical sense combined with a lively imagination. At an early age all the daughters undertook what would now be called social work. They also helped with the housework.

As a young girl Mother enjoyed painting and drawing and had art lessons. I still possess a few of her old sketch-books. She always showed a lively interest in the arts and continued working with the etching-needle to an advanced age. She had a good feeling for line; her favourite subjects were flowers.

Her maturity at an early age is indicated by a letter I possess, written when she was about ten years old; it is a letter about

practical matters, which my grandmother had told her to write.

While she was still living with her parents she acquired an understanding of ordinary everyday life which was very useful to her later on. She had an advantage over me in that respect; compelled to live in a cage by a convention which was inexorable in those days, I never had the opportunity to see 'normal life' as a child.

Arolsen, the castle and its surroundings, have a charm all their own, and the same can be said of Waldeck with its fields and deep forests, its ravines, mountains and hills and its bracing climate. The landscape is completely different from that of Het Loo, but both are spots one remembers and loves all one's life.

Mother began her official life in Holland with two happy initiatives. Following the advice of Mr Schimmelpenninck she allowed only young people who worked to be presented to her. This had a wholesome influence on the society of those days, where it was still quite common for young people to do no kind of useful work at all. The second innovation was that from the day of her arrival in the Netherlands she spoke only Dutch with Dutch people. This example forced The Hague society to abandon the custom of using a foreign language for conversation. It was due to her that Dutch soon became the current language in society.

It is impossible to know where exactly one's memories of one's parents begin. My experience is no exception in this respect. Although much of Mother's time was taken up with her duties as my father's wife, she always had a moment to spare for her little girl, and played with me and put me to bed in the evening. She also quite often took me out of doors, and at Het Loo she used to go out riding with me in her wicker carriage.

Mother drove the horses Father had given her. She had two greys (these were Arabs), a couple of Tarbes roans and black Transylvanians with white blazes and white stockings; one of these was Virak, who lived to become very old and

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was everybody's favourite. Sometimes I was allowed to drive Virak and his companion, at least to hold the reins, sitting on Mother's knee. These drives took place in the quiet country lanes of Het Loo. Mother also often went out walking with me.

Soon a regular hour was fixed when she taught me to do needlework. I always loved that; she sat in a big armchair by the window with me beside her, and told me a wonderful story while my fingers practised on the canvas.

Mother's rooms in the palace in The Hague looked out on the back of the roofs of an adjoining street. Between her windows and those roofs there was a high wall which enclosed a little garden in the palace grounds. In this garden there were several tall trees occupied in winter by hundreds of pigeons sheltering from the winds. The top part of the wall was on a level with our eyes: thus our view was entirely shut in, and we saw nothing of the rest of the world. It is easy to imagine what this meant for Mother, after Arolsen, where she had been used to a splendid view of sky and mountains from her window, but she never uttered a complaint. But in her rooms we were so happy and comfortable that I shall never forget those hours.

On Sundays I looked forward to the hour when she would tell me stories from the Bible. In front of her on the table she laid out prints which were intended to bring the stories even more strongly to life for me. Often she taught me a hymn or a psalm. Later on I had to learn these during the week and then had to say them on Sunday. I remember how I learnt the one beginning 'On mountains and in valleys, everywhere is God . . .'.

In the evening she taught me my prayers and later gave me Bible lessons. It was she who guided me in my first acquaintance with the faith.

When I was staying with her in Kissingen I had to memorize the following verse of Hymn 182:

Jesus lives! He is risen,
Jesus lives in eternity!

I shall be with Him eternally,
Thus is His promise to me.
I shall rise as He is risen,
Rise exultant from the grave,
And eternally praise the Saviour,
Who has given me eternal life.

Mother had a deep faith which gave her strength and never left her in the difficult moments of her life. She did not like to speak about it; it was too sacred for her. She was often reading her Bible and went regularly to church and Holy Communion; both meant a great deal to her. After her marriage she had become a whole-hearted member of the Dutch Reformed Church.

She was open to all that is good and beautiful, and to the achievements of the sciences and the arts, and was able to judge all this according to its value. With her lively mind she did not find it difficult to keep abreast of developments in every field. She was a keen reader.

I see Mother as the image of humility and sense of duty, as a person who thought nothing of herself and was only concerned to serve. She was always working, always busy; and she showed great moral courage.

From childhood I could observe these qualities every day, and her example has been very important to me. When I was a little older she used to mock at pride and vanity and all forms of conceit and boasting. No criticism is so effective as mockery, particularly with the young. I remember vividly the talks we had about the high requirements of moral courage, about sacrifice and the self-abnegation it demands.

She belongs to the happy few who have achieved great results in a great style.

With a true feeling for our national character, she succeeded fully in her ambition to bring the people and the Crown closer together, and to re-establish a real interaction between the two.

At the same time she was able to assist in promoting the country's prosperity. Her Regency was a happy time for the nation in many respects. She also gave her attention to the

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East and West Indies, for whose peoples so much had to be done in those days in order that they could profit from the peace and security and relative prosperity that had been achieved. She had a comprehensive understanding of the problems involved.

She was a strong personality of great will-power. She approached everybody with a natural kindness and sympathy, and was always prepared to believe in other people's good intentions. With her realism she combined a warm feeling for her fellow-men. There was in her a perfectly natural balance between the mind and the heart. She enjoyed the personal confidence of many people. She always understood the life and needs of others, particularly those of the sick and the destitute. She saw immediately how their lives could be most satisfactorily arranged and had a unique talent for nursing and understanding them.

She also had an extraordinary gift for arranging everything in her own surroundings comfortably and practically; her ideas were always sensible and effective, as was exemplified in my nursery, where all the toys were arranged and rearranged according to the use I made of them. Many people benefited from this gift, when they asked her advice.

She kept abreast of the current political and other problems with which Father had to deal, or which interested him, so that he always derived benefit from a discussion with her. At the time I was too young to realize how complex and difficult must have been her task as a wife and a Queen. The qualities that God had imparted to her enabled her to do her job brilliantly.

I have often noticed that nowadays, when there is a big difference in age between husband and wife in a happy marriage, the view of life of the younger of the two tends to dominate their union. This was not so in the case of my parents. My mother adapted herself wholly to the sort of life that my father's age imposed. The reader should appreciate the sacrifice that this meant. Truly, she persisted all her life in never asking anything for herself.

As Regent, her knowledge of Netherlands affairs was of great value to her. Soon after Father's death she took me into

her confidence and sometimes discussed the worries and problems of her Regency with me. This gave me an idea of the behaviour of all sorts of different people, and at that age my impressions were stronger than they would have been later. No one will be surprised to learn that they were not always favourable and that they had a considerable influence on my early development.

Mother's confidence made me very happy, but the things I heard were sometimes a little too much for me.

When I attained my majority, which meant the end of her Regency, Mother showed perfect self-control in her political retirement, although she was still in the prime of life, having only just reached forty. She accepted cheerfully the position that was hers as widow of the King and mother of the Queen, and she always faithfully fulfilled the duties it entailed.

By her firm and stable presence at the centre of our national life she became a source of strength for all, for my husband and myself and indirectly for the whole of the nation. Taking into account that stability, as well as her great qualities and talents, one obtains an adequate picture of her later years among our people.

Long before my marriage she had decided to let us have the palace of Het Loo which she loved so much, as well as the one in the Noordeinde which also held so many memories for her, and to keep the country-seat at Soestdijk for herself as a summer residence. She had bought the small palace in the Voorhout in The Hague, which had belonged to my Aunt von Sachsen, to serve her as a winter residence. The separation from me demanded a great effort of her, even though she realized in advance what my marriage would mean to her.

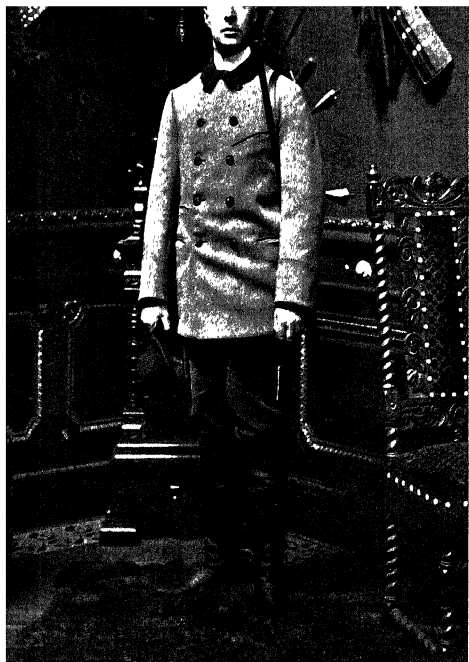
Here I have got far ahead of my story, and writing about Mother I have introduced myself from time to time. Now I shall tell about my own childhood. The reader will not fail to notice how intimately my life was linked to Mother's until I stretched my wings after my marriage.

2. *My Youth*

I SHALL BEGIN with the time when I spent those happy hours beside Mother's chair at the window in the Noordeinde. I was at the age when children begin to think, drawing their own conclusions from their experience and as it were thinking about them aloud. Children's lives are radiant with satisfaction and pleasure at the discovery that the small intelligence is a flexible and obedient tool, which can be used as they wish. To the child this discovery is of the same nature as the many preceding ones, such as seeing, hearing, speaking, walking and seizing objects.

I should correct this, for the intelligence of children is considerable, it sees clearly and detects immediately what things are about. Its only limitation is the smallness of the field to which it can apply itself, lacking training and experience.

For adults it is a joy to watch the development of a young intelligence. I had this experience first with my daughter, and again afterwards with my four grandchildren. Each child is different in this respect, and has its own preferences and interests.



Prince Hendrik

Ebner, The Hague

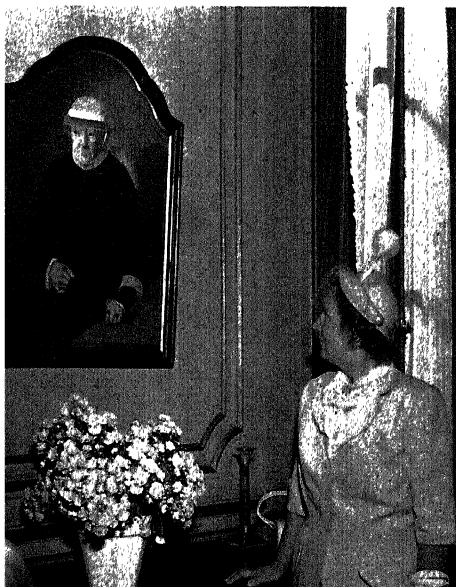
Wegner and Mottu, Amsterdam



With Prince Hendrik in
front of Het Loo, 1900



Princess Juliana with her mother



Queen Juliana in front of the portrait of her namesake, Juliana van Stolberg

The young sometimes have a true sense of humour, consciously or unconsciously. I remember how I used to love inventing nicknames for grown-ups and using them at moments they considered unsuitable. I was frequently inspired by a resemblance to a nice animal, and at other times by the similarity between a name and another word. Of course life with my parents, who had so many people around them, offered almost unlimited scope to my imagination. In those days I was always 'seeing something', an object or a plant or an animal. I needed frequent correction.

A second quality I remember is that I was never at a loss for a reply. '*Avoir la langue bien pendue*', the French call it; we have no exact equivalent for this in Dutch, to convey the humour that is implied in the French expression and that makes the impertinence easier to forgive.

On one occasion I said to an elder cousin of my mother's, when she pointed out that I did not seem to be at a loss for a reply: 'What do you expect, it is a family trait.' This was when I was six or seven years old.

I have always regarded Het Loo as my home.

Each has a spot on earth,
That he loves above all.
A region or a garden,
A village or a valley,

as the poet says. For me this spot was Het Loo. What a strong individuality it has and what a deep attachment it inspires: the house, the trees, the lawn.

In order to avoid monotony, I shall limit myself to saying a few more things about Het Loo, leaving out my childhood impressions of the palaces in Amsterdam and The Hague, of Soestdijk, Luxemburg and Oranje-Nassau's Oord.

The old castle of Het Loo was one of the possessions of William III, the Stadtholder and King, who used it as a hunting-lodge and also retired there to prepare his great projects in peace. Soon it became too small for his requirements and he

decided to build the present palace. His study has been preserved unchanged, as well as the chapel he built and the large drawing-room. It was here that he elaborated his plans for crossing the Channel, in order to prevent the consequences that the alliance between James I and Louis XIV would have had for Europe.

To an adult observer the mark of their founder is still clearly recognizable in the palace and the park. As a child I was not sensitive to it, although I was aware of the relics of a more recent history, of the time of my father's youth or perhaps a little earlier. There were for instance the stables for the race-horses of my elder brother and my Uncle Alexander (my father's brother). Further along there were the race-course and the gallops. In the old castle were the so-called clubroom of my father's falconry and several unusual guest-rooms dating back to his younger days. And in our palace I found a great many round games, which recalled times when guests were always coming and going, when parties were held after a tiring day's shooting. It was fun to play those old games again. Immediately behind the front door in the entrance-hall stood a table of gigantic dimensions with a steeplechase game painted on it. When one had thrown the dice one's advance was marked by little leaden race-horses.

A contemporary visitor would be shocked by the tasteless way in which the palace was furnished; how ugly much of the furniture was, and how ill assembled: souvenirs and trophies of my father's next to horrors from the days of Louis-Philippe, and so on. Wallpapers and curtains with enormous flower designs, and paper curtains in the old palace, even round the beds. These beds were four-posters, entirely enclosed, in which guests had to sleep.

Of course a more modern spirit manifested itself in my mother's rooms, furnished in 1878, just before her wedding, and in my nursery and bedroom. At least they came up to reasonable standards as far as air and light were concerned, and were marked only by the bad taste of the time, without having to carry the burden of preceding generations' misdeeds in this respect.

From Arolsen, Mother had brought with her ideas on health

and education which were very modern for her day; I shall discuss them later on. After Father's death she made many improvements in the house.

I do not remember my first nurses, nor do I have any recollection of the arrival of Freule van Heemstra—whom I used to call Brown-eyes—and of that of my French playmate, who was only just grown up herself, and who gave me French lessons.

My first meeting with Freule de Kock, who was always willing to step in when Brown-eyes went on holiday, has also faded from my memory. I remember a train journey with her, when she kept me amused by telling me about her travels. I always enjoyed playing with these companions, and never felt the absence of other children to play with—on the contrary, I was happy to be an only child and to have my parents all to myself.

I was very fond of dolls, and never tired of playing with them. Wherever we lived there was always a dolls' room for me, arranged by Mother, or a dolls' corner, surrounded by screens so as to seem like a house. In later years, when I spent much of my time with the four Shetland ponies Father had given me, I could not live without a corner containing a stable with wooden horses and a rocking-horse.

Mademoiselle Liotard left when I was about five and a half. Her successor was Miss Winter, who came to teach me English, but mainly as a governess. Soon after her arrival Freule van Heemstra also left.

In the years when Father's illness kept us at Het Loo, Miss Winter was my only companion. Luckily for me she was a cheerful person, very good at playing with me and at inventing new games.

When I had my first lessons she was always present and kept a close watch on my conduct. I should not forget to pay tribute to my first tutor Mr Gediking, a headmaster from The Hague, whose greatest merit was that he taught the pupil to concentrate. As soon as my thoughts began to wander he noticed it and called them back. A frown from

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Miss Winter emphasized his words. Arithmetic was his favourite subject, which suited me because I loved puzzling out all sorts of sums. In my spare time and sometimes during holidays I pored over the sums Mr Gediking had given me, and when he came back I would surprise him with the answers.

At first I did not like my lessons and never made an effort. Not until I was about eight did I decide that it was really necessary for me to start becoming 'clever', and I remember clearly that I resolved to do better from then on. I had just received a beautiful new copybook with a leather cover, and I felt that only a 'big girl' could be allowed to write in it. The importance such things can have at that age!

I loved my first lessons in Dutch history, with all those wonderful stories of the Counts of Holland. Count Floris V impressed me particularly: the abolition of serfdom, the granting of privileges to towns and corporations which created the third estate, all the things he did for poor and simple people, his life that earned him the honorary title of 'the mob's idol'. It upset me that he should have had to pay with his life for all his good works! I was not told of any other aspects of his personality, and it was as a hero that he continued to live in my imagination.

I do not think anyone could say exactly when his religious life began. At first we are unaware of the growth of the spiritual element, then all of a sudden it enters our consciousness and becomes a living reality. In a child's spontaneous nature it may live one moment and be entirely forgotten the next. In their case one can certainly not see it as a thread running through their lives. Bible lessons give a child a notion of God; but it seems doubtful whether this has any direct influence on its religious life, or rather on the unconscious roots of what may later become a conscious religious life.

The same thing goes for the prayers that a child is taught by its mother. All of a sudden (but when?) it notices that 'something' inside is really praying, and then the 'something' wants to be independent; it knows intuitively that it has its own relationship with God. From this you will understand that I could not possibly indicate the starting-point of my

religious life. It must have originated during Father's illness, for I remember the inner reaction of that 'something' from the time after his death when I learned: 'Jesus lives and we with Him. Death, where are thy terrors now?' In other words, I could follow Mother spiritually, and I believe that I could understand her in my childish way.

At the age of seven I was taken to church for the first time, but the service was beyond my comprehension. During our prolonged stays at Het Loo, Mother organized regular sermons in the castle chapel, for which she invited ministers from different parishes. I remember that I occasionally understood a little more of the sermons, and that I thought about them.

I refused categorically to pray with Miss Winter when Mother was prevented by her work. If she persisted I declared the prayer null and void, and said I would repeat it when she had left me; and I was as good as my word. This shows how strongly a child feels its religious life to be a private inner sanctum, and how inaccessible and reticent it is. Afterwards I felt the same way about confirmation lessons, which I regarded as interference with my religious life. I submitted to them, but I shut myself off from their influence. When a member of our entourage said that I should 'learn' how to believe, this only served to confirm me in my ideas.

Miss Winter was a strong personality, sincere and open. *'To train your character, to make a bold and noble woman out of you, unflinching and strong'*—such was her aim. One of the expressions of such a woman should be a 'bold' handwriting. She herself was certainly afraid of nobody. She was a 'bold woman'. She had all the virtues that characterize the English nation and that it fosters in its children. These virtues form the backbone of the British nation, a fact often emphasized by Miss Winter.

Mother, and Father too, wanted their child to receive a solid education, as much like that of any other child as possible, and they rightly thought that Miss Winter was equal to her task. They felt that a foreigner could more easily maintain a firm regime than a Dutchwoman. My education was influenced by the desire to prevent at all cost that certain events in the history of the family should repeat themselves

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—there had been a case when the whims and weaknesses of a child had been humoured too much, and the consequence had been that it did not develop sufficient resistance to the temptations of selfishness and love of comfort. I was always aware of this. Any sign of self-indulgence was firmly corrected, sometimes with a reference to the case in question.

Miss Winter read to me often, in a dramatic style which I enjoyed very much.

As a true Englishwoman she was a great animal-lover. This love was always enthusiastically expressed and the example had a considerable influence on me, although I never made such a fuss. Afterwards, at the age when one is always afraid of being ridiculous, I was most careful not to show warm friendship to animals. The fear that people would laugh at me if I showed too much feeling for them has never quite left me and it gave me a certain reserve, much as I liked them.

My daughter, whose feelings could develop in freedom, came to love her domestic animals much more naturally, and has enjoyed her relations with them more than I have.

I was fond of horses and often played at horses on my walks, which were frequent as Mother and Miss Winter insisted that I should have as much fresh air and exercise as a normal country child.

During the cold winters of Father's last years I learned to skate. It was not as simple as it sounds. Father belonged to a time when it was considered indecent for young girls to practise this sport; he was firmly opposed to it, and if he had known that I ignored his wish he would have been so annoyed that his condition might have suffered. But Mother found a way! I received my coaching in secret, and nobody told Father. How well I remember the first time, when I held on helplessly to the hands of one of Father's A.D.C.s; and afterwards we continued on the big pond, behind the sledge. Soon I began to love my skating. Of course I did not master the art right away, and I know from direct experience that ice is hard as well as slippery.

From 1890 I skated every winter on the moat of the Huis ten Bosch. When I was older we went on skating tours, and I

also organized races for the garrison. Times of frost always brought us much fun and pleasure.

Later Juliana performed her first feats of skating on the same moat. She also loved the sport and was always delighted to join in a tour. Once we even went as far as Friesland for the skating. I remember that afterwards we saw Scottish reels danced on a wooden platform laid on the ice—a fine old Friesian custom.

After Father's death Mother went abroad with me for a month or so every year, in order to take a rest in the mountain air. My tutor accompanied us; the lessons could not be interrupted. Mother wanted me to spend my holidays in the Netherlands: I should have pleasant memories of holidays at home. But there was always time available for short tours or drives with Mother. Her party and I often walked quite far, although I was considered too young for real walking tours—they were thought too strenuous for children, and Mother said there could be no question of them until I was grown up. But I was allowed to do anything I liked as long as it did not require undue exertion.

On her journeys Mother was always accompanied by General Dumonceau, an old friend of Father's and a keen lover of nature. He was a tireless walker, roaming all over the country, invariably kind and cheerful. When he went with me I was allowed to climb over boulders and rocks to pick alpine flowers, which he loved as much as I did. I can still see the tiger-lilies and wild cyclamens. They always grew in inaccessible places, and while I clambered from rock to rock he held me firmly with the crook of Father's old walking-stick, so as to prevent my slipping. All this climbing made the walks very enjoyable and although I did not care much for travelling I passed many a pleasant hour.

General Dumonceau always went on a reconnaissance tour before we set out on our journeys, and came back with reports on a few peaceful and attractive villages which were suitable for a holiday; these were submitted to Mother, who then decided where we should go this time.

Travel in Switzerland in those days was done by mail-coach.

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The postilion had a horn with which he announced the arrival of the coach to the villagers. Fortunately there were no motor-cars yet. My first encounter with that vehicle took place in Mecklenburg when we went there on our first visit, which I shall relate in due course.

On our journeys Mother was always accompanied by one of her ladies, an A.D.C., and a referendary from the Queen's Secretariat for the official documents; then there were the General, Miss Winter and Freule van de Poll.

When I was a little older I had a pony which I used to ride in the woods, in larger parties. In winter I rode on the beach near The Hague, weather permitting; in bad weather I went to the riding-school. I continued to ride until I was about fifty; the pony was replaced by a little Arab who was followed by a big horse, and for army inspections I had a very tall one, far from comfortable to ride side-saddle.

When I reached the right age Miss Winter gave me tennis lessons. Long before that I absolutely had to have piano lessons, but fortunately they were stopped when it was found that I had no ear for music. I had equally little taste for my lessons in dancing and drawing. Drawing lessons are always dull, in the first stages; it is difficult to do anything about that. My lessons came at a time when few had any sense of drawing; I learned very little.

Anyway I did not like all the theories about how exactly I should do it. I preferred to look for a method of my own, which of course was no good at all; but I was and always remained a difficult pupil. When I grew up I did a lot of drawing as a hobby, I took my sketch-books out of doors and in winter I drew dogs and horses. As I had no technical schooling, the result was far from impressive. I continued in this dilettantish manner until after the First World War. After the unkind things I have said about my lessons, I should point out that I did learn the technique of water-colours, whereas I had only vague notions of how to work with oils and crayon. These two I taught myself, and then after the war I had drawing lessons again. Many years later I was happy to be told by my teachers that the important thing is to find one's own way and that many things depend on feeling rather

than technique. That was what I liked to hear. I never used my water-colour technique much, because it took too much of my time.

Father could still appoint, together with Mother, my French teacher, Dr Salverda de Grave, who afterwards took over all but one of Mr Gediking's lessons. Mr Gediking continued as my mathematics teacher only for many years, latterly at my own request. He also taught me the first principles of physics. Another appointment in which Father still had a hand was that of Freule van de Poll, who was to represent the Dutch influence in my education.

Dr Salverda de Grave was responsible for my entire secondary education, which I received in an abridged form, because I had to start early on my academic training, in order to complete the programme Mother had drawn up with her counsellors before my eighteenth birthday.

Miss Winter taught me English, both grammar and literature.

A special educational problem was created by my appearances in public. It was sometimes difficult to combine these with my lessons, the more so as the possibilities of correction were limited by the thought of the effect on my fitness for official occasions. I soon discovered, although of course everybody tried to hide the fact from me, that when I had been naughty the prospect of an appearance in public made all the difference to my punishment.

This subject has carried me beyond my eleventh year, and I shall now return to that time in order to explain how my life changed after Father's death. The most important difference was the transition from the country to the town; this imposed more restrictions on my freedom than it would do nowadays. Although Mother was the centre of life at the court, this did not mean that I was completely free from its influence. Stories of earlier times have given me the impression that under Father there was a period when a clear distinction was made between official and private life; when one was at liberty to arrange one's private life as one liked.

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In my time things were different; I could only be an ordinary human being when I was alone with Mother. Court etiquette required us to lead a life that was permanently semi-official; that is to say, we had to be prepared at any time to step into rigid formality. The palaces themselves bore the mark of formality, one had to look hard for a corner that was comfortable and simply human. When I had been cooking, or when I came back from the stables or from digging up potatoes in my garden, it was not only a wash that awaited me, but also the effort to resume the formal behaviour that our entourage demanded. Needless to say, we were denied many innocent pleasures for the sake of convention. I shall from now on refer to these conditions as 'the cage'. The name speaks for itself: one felt hedged in and longed for freedom.

As soon as mourning allowed, Mother set to work. After Father's long illness it was urgently necessary to establish contacts and to appear in public to show people we were still there! Guests were invited to dinner-parties, which were held in the formal style described above. Mother sat in the centre on one side of the table, with me opposite her, and we had the highest guests next to us. After dinner, we talked to the guests. The first few times Freule van de Poll accompanied me and engaged me in conversation with some of them; afterwards I talked to all. These dinners were my school of conversation.

Soon we began to pay official visits to towns and provinces, always arranged so as not to interfere with my lessons. At first these duties frightened me, not at the moment itself but before. I became highly wrought-up about them, with the result that in spite of my perfect health I looked pale and tired during the visits, and gave the public the impression of being a weak child, which made Mother unhappy. I soon got used to the public appearances themselves; Mother made things easy for me.

In 1891, after our first visit to Amsterdam, the Kaiser came on an official visit with the Empress. On this occasion I had to act as hostess to the Empress, at home as well as in public. She was very kind and motherly. We followed Mother and

the Kaiser in a red carriage. I also had to attend the official banquet. The days of the visit were rich in new experiences for me.

In 1892, after our period of rest in the mountains, I accompanied Mother on the return visit. Parades were held in Berlin and Potsdam, and I was taken to see the latter. I looked forward to the moment when the little princes would come by, trying to keep in step with the guards. It was a sight to see: they could manage it for two or three steps, and then had to run to catch up with the ranks.

I played with the Kaiser's sons; between the eldest of them and myself there was only two years' difference in age. They were very nice to me and gave me some of their boyish treasures.

I shall refrain from discussing our official tours and visits, which have all been described elsewhere.

Normal companionship with children was unthinkable in the cage; I never knew it and had little or no opportunity to make friends. I have hardly any friends from my childhood, only acquaintances.

Mother did invite children to play with me, and after Father's death they came regularly, usually in large numbers. We played and romped in one of the drawing-rooms, which had none of the qualities of a home.

At one time—I forget whether this was before Father's illness or after his death—an attempt was made to let other children come and play with my toys in my room. As an only child I was far from accommodating, and in fact I disliked these visits heartily. Unfortunately I had my way. As I see it now, it would have been better for my character if I had been made to accept these intrusions. At the time, I was very pleased when they were stopped.

The invitations had to be sent to all children of a certain class of families, a fixed number of times for each of them every winter. This made everything completely rigid, but the principle of course was sound, the only way to prevent envy and bitterness.

The parties were given for children of my own age and

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younger ones at the same time. Needless to say I felt very big and important among the smaller fry. I think I enjoyed their company best; I was supposed to 'look after' them, and I loved that.

When my grandparents were still alive and we had the annual family reunions at Arolsen it was always a wonderful experience for me to play as an equal among my cousins. There we fought over our toys, as children will do. Only very rarely did I have a chance to practise my fighting at home, when the cousins came to stay with us.

In the autumn of 1892 Aunt Sophie, my father's sister, and Uncle Karl von Sachsen-Weimar celebrated their golden wedding. This was the occasion for a particularly well-attended reunion; Mother and I went too. Aunt Sophie came to stay with us every year and always loved being back in her old country. She was my last link with Father, which created a special bond between us, and she would be my successor if something should happen to me. Even at that age I attached great importance to the fact that she was the person to whom I would leave our country.

A warm friendship and a strong mutual appreciation existed between Aunt Sophie and Mother. My aunt, who was so well informed about life in this country, was the ideal companion for Mother, who could discuss everything with her. My aunt was exceptionally gifted and had a penetrating mind. She and I were also great friends, and I have a vivid recollection of our talks in her room, which were very helpful to me. She was very intelligent, and Weimar owed her a great deal. Princess in the noblest sense of the word! I was also very fond of my uncle.

In Weimar I attended all the festivities except the very late ones and, the hours of play with my aunt's grandchildren apart, I really acted the part of a grown-up!

As next of kin of the bride Mother and I were seated among the highest guests; of course there were times when I felt rather lost among them. It was, incidentally, in the course of this visit that Aunt Sophie's son-in-law, Duke Johann Albrecht zu Mecklenburg, who had married her youngest

daughter Elsi, presented his two younger brothers to me: Adolf, the elder, and Hendrik, then sixteen years old, who would one day be my husband. So that was our first meeting.

Needless to say I was strongly impressed with all I saw: people and parties, the pomp and circumstance, the kindness of my aunt and uncle. Our fatherland sent a considerable sum of money which my aunt was to spend as she wished. Subsequently she stipulated that after her death I should dispose of the proceeds in a way that would benefit the people of the Netherlands.

I shall now return to daily life. Freule van de Poll has had a stronger influence on my character than one would expect of a person who was so very modest and retiring.

She always emphasized, to me and to everyone else, that she had a very high opinion of Miss Winter as an educator, and she gave her all the credit for what had been achieved.

This self-effacement made a profound impression on me, and served as a formative influence in itself.

Like all children I went through a period when I followed the opinion of my governess in everything. It was Freule van de Poll's quiet and tactful way of offering her own opinions whenever they differed from Miss Winter's which started me thinking for myself. Gradually I began to doubt the infallibility of Miss Winter's judgment. More frequent contacts with Mother contributed to this change of heart.

I began to realize that I had a personality of my own, or at least was on my way towards finding one. It was at that time that I turned away from my governess to Mother, whose authority I accepted of my own accord. From then on I became an independent person, in spite of my young age. It was a turning-point in my existence. The moral authority of my governess was a thing of the past. I emphasize the word governess, for I continued to love Miss Winter, and a firm friendship came into being in later years, when she was no longer my governess.

At the time I drew the logical conclusion and tried to free myself from her factual authority as well, but I was restrained by the thought that if she carried out her threat of leaving

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this would add to Mother's worries, which were numerous enough as it was. I often came close to causing a definite rupture, but my resolve that this had to be avoided stood firm. Even so I was not quite convinced that I acted wisely. Mother made it clear to me that she could not take charge of my everyday education and told me to continue to accept Miss Winter's authority; and, while refusing to do so, I sometimes wondered if I had not thrown away a thing which might have been of value to me in later life. Looking back now, I think I can say that a recognized and uninterrupted authority in my education might have given me a better notion of self-discipline. However that may be, from my twelfth year I did without such an authority. In subsequent conflicts I had to exercise great self-control to spare Mother the trouble of having to look for a new governess. My love for her won in the end, and Miss Winter stayed on until my confirmation in October 1896, when both she and Freule van de Poll left me.

At the age of thirteen I had an experience of great moment for my spiritual development. It happened at the time of my first lessons in cosmography. I had gained an idea of the rotation of the earth from an astronomical globe. In one of the following lessons Plateau's experiment was discussed; I do not remember if I saw it performed. A tank with a spindle in the middle was filled with water, and oil was poured on top. As the spindle was made to rotate, a sphere formed round it—the sun—which in its turn sent forth other spheres, the planets and the earth; finally the moons round the planets were formed in the same way. This experiment disturbed me deeply, for it destroyed in one blow the story of the creation as I knew it. I was so upset that I did not dare to ask Mother about it, as it was she who had told me about the creation; but it continued to occupy me and in the end I mentioned it to another grown-up. I explained that the experiment was not in accordance with the Bible and that I did not know what to think, but received a scornful reply: 'Surely you did not *really* believe that the earth was created in a week', which could only increase my doubt. Nobody ever suspected how

dark it was in my soul in those days. The God of the creation, the trusted God on whom I had relied so completely, perhaps did not exist at all, so I could not even pray any more. I was all alone with this problem; nobody could have helped me.

It seemed a long time until the dark shadows disappeared, until I had fought my way through to a renewed feeling of God's nearness and had overcome the shock. My misery without God had been so profound and I had experienced such agonies of doubt that I took a firm resolution: 'Never again,' and except for one short period, which was as painful and disturbing as the first, I have never again had to fight against doubt and the feeling of being abandoned by God. My experience had shown me how utterly useless and barren are hesitations and doubts and reflections without a choice. This 'never again' has been my life-belt through trial and affliction and many difficult circumstances.

The experience also had another consequence, which was that at this early age I declared war on science, on a philosophy which had caused me such misery. I turned away in horror from those who revered science as the highest good, and resolved to confide the guidance over my life to my dear and sacred faith, to accord precedence to the heart and the soul and only a second place to my intelligence, as their obedient servant; to admit into my heart the Divine peace, which passes understanding but also enlightens it. Just as the eye and the ear fulfil tasks of high importance but are governed by the will, so also the intelligence should be subservient to God's will and not pretend to be qualified for a dominating position.

These last conclusions are the fruit of my reflections at a riper age, when I had also learned that we are abandoned by God only in appearance, for He never leaves us. Afterwards I understood that it was deep wisdom on His part that had made me know doubt as a child, in order to fortify my faith so that I could derive more strength from it when the time had come to assume my duties.

The years I am now about to discuss, starting when I was thirteen, show a marked growth in my faith and its manifestations. My religious life was budding. In a child all this is

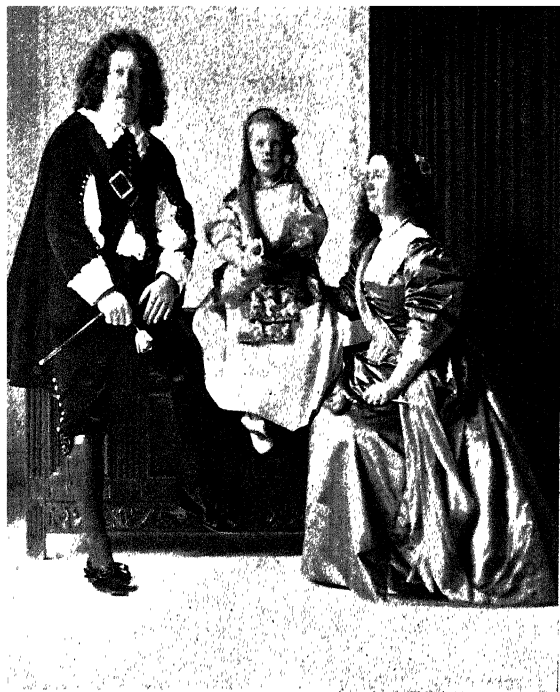
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so different from adult experience that it is very difficult if not impossible to describe it adequately.

Everything is growing, the soul as well as the body, and there is a strong fear of outside interference which explains a child's hermetic impenetrability and the impossibility to discuss the things it holds most sacred. Along with my personality a consciousness developed inside me of God's universal domination, of an almighty God who should not be touched by anybody. If anyone should have offended Him, I would have resisted with all my might. These feelings lived in my unconscious, they did not come to the surface. One could describe them as a deep undercurrent in my existence.

To return to my education. I should like the reader to remember that it was the end of the era of intellectual liberalism. The men who thought that everything could be attained by scientific means rejected all other opinions as negligible and gave them no chance to develop. Able men who thought differently were certainly not lacking, but they hardly received a hearing. Reason had the last word and in the final instance the attitude towards God and religious faith was one of negation. What could not be confirmed by scalpel, microscope and telescope was denied and ignored. This spirit permeated the thoughts of many people without always manifesting itself directly. One felt it everywhere in the society of the time. Consciously and unconsciously I encountered it in my studies. Some teachers represented it fully, others only incidentally; fortunately there were also some who were free from it.

Whenever God's Guidance (as in history) or God's omnipotence appeared to be ignored, I was hurt and put up an inner resistance. This greatly influenced my development. When I did not agree with my teachers I still had to go through with the lessons, but I simply brushed aside the ideas that were incompatible with my fundamental convictions, and refused to consider them further. Of course with several subjects the problem never occurred. Most of my lessons were strictly matter-of-fact. The majority of the subjects had my interest, and demanded little effort. As I see it now, it was



The Royal Family at
the Huis ten Bosch in
seventeenth-century
costume

Deutmann, The Hague



Princess Juliana
with her horse



Ziegler, The Hague

The Queen-Mother

an easy life; I sat on my straight high-backed chair with its cane seat, behind the table with my desk on it, in which I kept my copybooks and writing materials; and then it was just a matter of learning what I was taught.

Most of the lessons were interesting and there were breaks at the right moment, just when I began to feel tired. My secondary and academic education were combined. I never went beyond the secondary level in science and foreign languages (French, German and English). My favourite subjects were Dutch and history. I had Dutch history on all three levels, the academic course being given by Professor Blok; world history on the two higher levels, the first being Dr Salverda de Grave's responsibility, the second, which began when I was thirteen, Professor Krämer's.

I should add here that during the hour I spent with Mother, whenever she was free in the evening, we often discussed the great men of the past. Her view of the elements of true greatness was very instructive and has retained its hold on me. These discussions took place at the time of my second course in Dutch history and the first in world history.

Professor Blok, the author of a *History of the Dutch People*, had a view of our history and of the Eighty Years' War in particular that I could not accept. I think I am right in saying that Blok and Krämer were followers of Ranke and adopted his method of original research, which leads to fragmentation and neglects or at least does not bring to light the higher unity of historical events in God's Guidance. In order to sharpen my perception Krämer often gave me a few historical facts and situations from which I had to draw my own conclusions. His course covered the whole of history from the earliest days to the time of my lessons.

Roughly at the same time as Professor Krämer, Professor Kan began my advanced course in geography, an absorbing series of lectures. Professor De Louter was my teacher for the Governmental Statute of the Indies, and continued with a course in Dutch constitution and constitutional law. He also taught me economics, a course that lasted until a fortnight before my marriage, whereas his other courses ended before I came of age.

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For geography and ethnography of the Indies there was Professor De Groot, whom I appointed myself when I had come of age.

I must not forget Dr Hofstede de Groot, my teacher of history of art, a subject which allowed me to relax while I looked at reproductions of great works of art.

Mother attended my confirmation class and the courses which had an immediate bearing on my future task. She made notes for me; during the last year before my majority she spent about four hours every day listening and writing, in addition to all her other work!

As a child already I began to dream of great deeds. I remember the inspiring effect on me of a meeting in The Hague in commemoration of those who had died in the military expedition to the Isle of Lombok. The climax of the evening came with the rendering of a poem written by Lieutenant Alting van Geusau shortly before his death in action and set to music for this occasion. It was heard by the audience standing, and not only impressed me deeply but also aroused my desire to 'do something', whatever it might be. Already I felt unconsciously dissatisfied with my life in the cage, which prevented any kind of initiative; and in a way the evening could be said to have but reinforced the dissatisfaction evoked in me by the feeble spirit of the times.

In those days I had long talks with Mother about conditions in the Netherlands East Indies and the policy of the Governor-General. I was shown reports of military actions in Lombok and in Atjeh and other parts of the archipelago, which added further to my desire for action. When I became reigning Queen I was also stimulated by the descriptions of cases of outstanding courage on the battle-field, in the recommendations for decorations which I received.

I must revert for a moment to Professor De Groot's lectures, because they prepared the ground for my interest in missionary work. This happened in spite of the Professor's teaching, for he represented the rationalistic school with which I disagreed; but I was deeply moved by the picture

he gave me of the *adat* law and the religions of the Indies, and pitied all those people who lived in a psychosis of fear owing to their notion of God and their belief in evil spirits. I was stirred to pity by the accounts of human sacrifices made in order to appease the evil spirits, and from then on I took a warm interest in the efforts to spread the Gospel among these poor people.

In 1895 Mother took me to England, for ten days or perhaps a little longer. It was not just a pleasure trip; Professor Krämer accompanied us in order to guide me round the British Museum, where I had to see the Assyrian, Egyptian and Greek antiquities. The museum aroused little interest in me, all the other things I found very exciting. What an experience: to see London in the spring, and to have so many unexpected things happening. I suppose Mother also wanted me to meet Queen Victoria's large family, for I went on several visits with her and also accompanied her to several luncheons.

The visit took on momentarily an official character when we went to pay our respects to the old Queen at Windsor, but otherwise we were free in our movements. We saw my mother's sister, Aunt Helena, at Claremont, where I played with my cousins. We had luncheon with the future King Edward VII at Marlborough House, and paid a visit to his daughter-in-law, the future Queen Mary, at St James's Palace. Her first child had not yet begun to walk at that time, and the King who died a few years ago had not been born. What a long time ago!

We made the crossing on board the old yacht *De Valk*, a paddle-steamer which had a long record of service with my father; I had accompanied my parents on it when they went to England in 1883 or '84. This was to be its last voyage.

From 1892 we spent the summers of the even years at Soestdijk. I had known the house before, when my parents stayed there for the first time in 1887. I cannot say that it pleased me greatly. I far preferred Het Loo, both because the house and its surroundings are more attractive and because I considered it my home, which Soestdijk was not.

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We still spent the summers of the odd years at Het Loo, as well as the autumns after the opening of the States-General. From Soestdijk we went to attend the celebrations of the university of Utrecht in 1896, the medieval tournament in particular.

Soon I was to say farewell to the schoolroom, and move into 'grown-up' apartments which included a study where I would complete my education.

In October we went to The Hague for my confirmation. In order to avoid the crowds that would gather if the ceremony took place in church, just as for anybody else, Mother decided that it had better be arranged in the palace. Of course a rigid decorum had to be observed; many members of the court were invited. This struck me as completely incompatible with the idea of a solemn vow to God, and I resolved to remain unimpressed at the moment of the confirmation, if this was how it had to be done. The Holy Communion following my confirmation took place in the Kloosterkerk, and there of course we were all treated as equals.

In the meantime my confirmation lessons had not provided me with the answer to the question that dominated my religious life: Who is Christ, what is His meaning for my life? My introduction to the answers of theology, instead of increasing my knowledge and understanding of Him, had had the contrary effect. I was convinced that Christ, on Whom after all everything depends in our lives, had not been given the place and the attention due to Him.

In later years, when I had come to know the Great Unknown, He Himself transformed this emptiness, this spiritual poverty, into a glorious Fullness, and even more: when I had arrived at a riper age, He made me understand that He and God are but One and the Same.

Many passages in the Old and New Testaments testify to this, if only one understands them properly. To me this is not theology, but a joyful experience.

The reader should realize that that thought dominates this book. He will notice that little mention is made of the Churches. They have played no part of importance in my life, far removed as they were from my personal bond with

Christ and His Guidance. They have no place in a book about my personal experience.

In the later years of my life the younger generation began to show enthusiasm for a new spirit in the Church. Immediately I felt united with these young people through the integrity, the honesty and the sincerity that manifested themselves in their faith and their life; for unity and fraternity in Christ—the same Holy Communion for all—form the essential content of my message. I try as much as I can to adapt its expression to the character and spiritual needs of individuals and peoples.

I applaud whole-heartedly the endeavour of all those who have shown their understanding of the spiritual needs of our time and their desire to relieve them, and of all those young people who are waiting for the community that will be permeated by the spirit they seek, the community that will be aware that it exists only for Christ and wants to follow Him and serve Him in obedience and love. With that community of the future I say: 'Forgetting what lies behind me and reaching out to what lies ahead, I struggle to attain the goal for the prize of God's call, which is from above, in Christ Jesus.'

I entered upon my independence as a grown-up person with some apprehension: would I be equal to it? I was completely free, except for my lessons. At the same time there was undeniably a certain youthful pride in being grown up and free at last. That is how I felt it at first and it appealed strongly to my imagination.

In late autumn we spent some time in the mountains above Aix-les-Bains and then went on to the Italian art centres. Mother was very good at making the best possible use of Baedeker; she always knew before we arrived in a town what there was in the way of paintings, sculpture, churches and graveyards, so we saw a great deal.

In December a busy time began for me in The Hague. There were endless receptions in the afternoons and evenings. In January there was the state ball with all its formality and its obligation to talk continually; and we had dinners, theatres,

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concerts, in short it was my first season. Still, I did not dislike it; I was really grown up now.

How convinced I was of the importance of the fact!

Mother began to introduce me to my task of government. I accompanied her to the opening of the States-General and attended several conferences and audiences. She also let me read important reports. What follows is the programme of an official visit we paid to Amsterdam. The time-table you find here gives only a summary impression of these busy and tiring days, crammed full of audiences, visits, dinners and parties.

Saturday: 6 p.m. Arrival Central Station; 7.30 p.m. Dinner in the Moses Room (at the palace); 8.30 p.m. Arrival of a delegation from Mecklenburg-Schwerin, which will announce the death of the Grand Duke of Mecklenburg and the accession to the Regency of Duke Johann Albrecht von Mecklenburg-Schwerin.

Sunday: 10 a.m. Divine Service in the Nieuwe Kerk; 1.30 p.m. Visit to the Royal Zoological Society 'Natura Artis Magistra' (the Amsterdam Zoo); 7 p.m. Dinner in the Moses Room.

Monday: 10.30 a.m. Audience to military and civil authorities; 1.30 p.m. Audience for committees; 4.30 p.m. Drive through the town; 7 p.m. Dinner in the Moses Room; 9.30 p.m. Reception of ladies who wish to be presented.

Tuesday: 10 a.m. Audience to private persons; 1.30 p.m. Visit to the Fort Pampus by steamer. 7 p.m. Dinner in the Gallery Room; 9.30 p.m. Reception in the Throne Room of three Princes of Borneo, who will offer presents in the name of their father, the Sultan of Kutei.

Wednesday: 10.30 a.m. Visits to the Art Society 'Arti et Amicitiae' and to the Bank of the Netherlands; 2 p.m. Visits to a hospital and to the Six Museum; 7 p.m. Dinner in the Gallery Room; 9.30 p.m. Reception of ladies who wish to be presented.

Thursday: 10.30 a.m. Visits to the Old People's Home and to the Panorama and Diorama; 2 p.m. Visits to the Children's Hospital and to a lithographic printing works; 7 p.m. Dinner in the Gallery Room.

Friday: 9 a.m. Departure from Amsterdam.

Towards the end of that busy winter, on the 23rd of March, we received the news of Aunt Sophie's sudden death. She collapsed in the middle of her work and died within a few

hours. We felt her loss deeply after all the love we had always had from her and the advice and help she had always been prepared to give us; and she had been our last link with Father.

As I said before, she would have been my successor if something had happened to me. Her going gave me a taste of real life; it matured me, and strengthened my sense of responsibility towards my future task.

After the first weeks of mourning we went to Amsterdam for our annual visit, and from there set out on our holiday, first to Vienna and then to a mountain resort. On the way back we stopped at Weimar to see my old uncle and offer our sympathy. It was a sad visit; we experienced the loss of our beloved aunt as it were for a second time.

Of course our stay in Vienna had been a wonderful experience for me. Our hotel in the Ring allowed us to see Viennese life at its best: the horsemen, the carriages with the 'juckers' in their unusual harness, and in the early evening the Prater with its busy traffic and its happy crowds, dressed after the latest fashion. We visited many magnificent museums, the Albertina with its vast collections of etchings and drawings by old masters, and of course Schönbrunn and the Burg. How many things there were to admire within those walls. We even made a trip to Budapest.

The Emperor Francis Joseph paid us a visit. The Empress invited us to luncheon, but in the end we did not go, as the Imperial couple were plunged into deep mourning by the news that the Empress's sister, the Duchess of Alland, had died tragically in a fire at a charity ball.

In Alt-Aussee we were joined by Ada de Joannis, whom Mother had appointed as my temporary companion to improve my French conversation. Our relations were not confined to a few months in 1897. I enjoyed her company; she was asked again several times, and we became friends. Ada was of Alsatian origin.

Before she came to us she had been companion to my later husband's sister and had spent many months in his parents' home. So naturally in the course of our conversations she told me many things about the Mecklenburg family and

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brought us closer together even before we saw each other again after our first meeting as children at Weimar.

In the winter of 1898 the preparations for my installation began. I set to work on my installation speech, the whole of which I wrote myself.

In the spring we visited Paris, once again with an eye to my education. I was delighted by all I saw, too many things to describe, and I contracted angina and arrived in Cannes with a temperature of over 102°. My memories of Cannes are limited to the four walls of my room and the music of the frogs in the trees outside the window. Angina lasts about six days and then it starts again with a high temperature and a sore throat. This can continue up to six weeks. During one of the intervals we saw Queen Victoria, who was on holiday in Menton and probably enjoying it more than I was!

Many things were going on in Cannes. There was a wedding in great style: Adini Mecklenburg married Christian of Denmark, who became famous as King for his courageous passive resistance to the German invaders. Nearly all the members of the Mecklenburg family were present, and they were numerous in those days! Among them were my future husband and his brother Adolf. I saw nobody.

We then went on to Italy, where we admired many old monuments and art treasures in various towns. My angina still bothered me. Mother began to worry and asked our doctor to come, but it was not easy for him because in the meantime riots had broken out in several parts of Italy. The cause was the price of bread, in Florence at any rate, where we were when they started. Mother anxious, I found it exciting and enjoyed myself immensely. All the doors and shutters were closed in a hurry before the menacing crowds. We were in town that afternoon and only just managed to reach the safety of a palazzo before the rioters arrived. The gate was shut, and there we were! At the back of the palazzo there was a street where the crowds had not yet arrived. We left by a back entrance and made our way back to the hotel. That evening I was deeply disappointed when I was told that I could not go and see what was going on in town. The

gentlemen of our party returned with stories of shooting and of crowds crying '*Fuero, fuero*'. The city looked deserted and all the houses were locked up. I had to wait until the next day, when we read the local newspapers with eager interest.

Our doctor in the meantime was unable to leave Milan. We could not wait for him and went on to Switzerland for a rest in the mountains, travelling by a roundabout way, via Innsbruck, so as to avoid the troubled areas. I recovered without the help of the doctor; when he finally joined us in Switzerland all he could do was state the fact.

With all the preparations we spent a very busy summer at Soestdijk.

Shortly before my birthday on the 31st of August we went to The Hague where at the very moment when I completed my eighteenth year, at half past five in the afternoon, I signed my first official papers, already dressed for the state dinner. With this act I began my reign. My first signatures were put to the decrees that awarded the Grand Cross of the Lion of the Netherlands and the Grand Cross of the Order of Oranje-Nassau to my mother.

September 5th: Entry into Amsterdam. Overwhelming reception.

September 6th: Installation. Nocturnal festivities outside the palace.

No possibility of sleeping. Mother asked people gently to remember my need of rest. The next evening all were in their stockings. How shall I describe my profound emotion, which as usual did not show at all? I must leave it to the reader's imagination. I can say with full conviction that on *that* day my emotions disappeared under—I emphasize the *under*, on a different level—the impressions of the morning's events.

While I was preparing for the ceremony, I knew that the whole palace was filling up with the States-General, the ministers, the court and servants. Then most of them went on their way to the Nieuwe Kerk. The patriotic song '*Wien Neerlands Bloed*' was solemnly sung under my window when members of the States-General and the government, followed by many others, left the palace. The last to leave were my

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family, Mother last of all. Now there were only the servants, whom I would greet on my long walk through all the rooms and galleries of the palace, and the procession that was to accompany me.

A feeling of emptiness and complete loneliness came over me.

At last the moment arrived when I had to leave my rooms. The train of the royal mantle was taken up by the bearers. All the standards of the army, which were to precede me, were lowered. Overwhelming experience for me, who received this salute for the first time.

Then all took up their places and we walked slowly past the ranks of servants, so many faithful old faces, betraying their emotion. It seemed an eternity in that deathly silence and in my mood of loneliness and desolation.

Then we had to descend the high staircase. Would I still be able to utter a word in church? Would I still have a voice? In that silence in which one could have heard a pin drop, I addressed the nearest train-bearer: 'All right so far, Mr Grovestins?' What a relief, my voice was still there! 'Excellent,' came the answer.

Once we had descended the stairs, things seemed easier; I had no further difficulties and in church my feeling of loneliness left me and action made a human being of me again.

There are so many accounts of the installation and the formal entries and festivities following it that I need not describe them further.

Everywhere I went I was received with the warmest enthusiasm. There could be no doubt as to the strength of the ties between Crown and people.

After six unforgettable weeks, which included my first opening of the States-General, Mother and I returned to the peace of Het Loo and I set to work seriously. It was a quiet period in our history. Little or nothing ever happened. Mother had dutifully retired from everything to do with governing, but that was the only change. Same entourage, same spirit, same cage. By living exactly as these conditions demanded one had an easy time and nothing to worry about. Even if I had tried, I would have changed nothing.

I did obediently as I was told. I always listened to Mother's advice, except of course in government matters. Her strong personality and her practical sense in all problems of life, which I have already described, made this only natural. Like everybody else, I was always one step behind her in judgment.

Behaving like a grown-up, becoming reigning Queen, is not the same thing as attaining one's full maturity.

Although on the one hand I had the illusion of being grown up, on the other hand I was conscious of a void in my existence, which was going to be filled up only very slowly. I was still lacking in experience and wisdom and had no vision of the possible and desirable development of the Netherlands in the near future.

One event of the summer of 1898 which I must mention was the exhibition *De Vrouw* ('Woman') which had been arranged to coincide with my coming of age. The feminist movement was at its height. I remember that its supporters were extremely active at the Peace Conferences in The Hague, particularly at the first of the two held in 1899. I shall not discuss these conferences; they are outside my scope. I only want to note that Professor Asser kindly gave me a few very interesting lectures on subjects of international law which were included in the programme of the conference.

Towards the end of October 1898 we went to Stuttgart to attend the wedding of my cousin Pauline von Württemberg and Fritz Wied, the eldest son of my father's cousin Marie Wied. Pauline was the daughter of Prince Wilhelm of Württemberg and of Mother's deceased sister Marie. Marie had been Mother's favourite sister, with whom she had shared everything in her youth; after her early death, Pauline also became a favourite, and she stayed with us often. Our three years' difference in age lost their meaning as I grew up and like our mothers we became great friends. In spite of all the etiquette and the official obligations such weddings were entertaining events for us young people. What fun we had!

Another favourite visitor was Mother's youngest sister,

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Aunt Lily, who was only seven years older than I. She was wonderfully lively in those days, always ready to join in my activities. She too was a good friend. Mother invited her often after the death of my grandmother and my grandfather's second marriage. In 1899 she became engaged to Alexander Erbach-Schönberg. That gave us great joy. In the autumn the young couple came to stay with us for several weeks.

Pauline and Fritz Wied asked me to stand godmother to their son Hermann, who was christened in Potsdam, where Fritz was stationed as an officer, in the autumn of 1899. We went there and attended the ceremony.

My life had been so sheltered, allowing me only occasional glimpses of ordinary human life, that I am unable to draw a picture of the closing years of the last century. From time to time a sound from everyday life penetrated through the vacuum around me; that was all. Perhaps this experience is in itself characteristic of the times.

Nevertheless I was aware of the doubt and unbelief that dominated the spiritual life of many intellectuals and poisoned their thinking. Faith in Christ hardly counted as a force in society. It was almost impossible to oppose the spirit of the times, which was one of negation.

I also remember that people often asked themselves: why and for what purpose do I live and work, when nothing makes any difference? (It should be recognized that this was a superficial view: those who could penetrate to the essence of things were aware that an entirely different era was on the way.) People wondered: what will the future bring, if the present is so unimportant and monotonous? There was no incentive to action, to any kind of initiative; life consisted of preliminary discussions and more preliminary considerations and discussions, followed by objections against everything. The nation was asleep. What a contrast to the world a few years later and to the present time!

3. *The Early Years of the New Century*

AFTER OUR VISIT to Amsterdam in 1900 we travelled on to Arolsen for the wedding of my youngest aunt.

On the eve of the wedding day, according to an old custom, the bridal wreath was presented to the bride by young girls singing the aria from *Der Freischütz*:

‘Wir winden dir den Jungfernkranz
Mit veilchenblauer Seide;
Wir führen dich zu Spiel und Tanz,
Zu Glück und Liebesfreude!
Schöner grüner, schöner grüner Jungfernkranz!
Veilchenblaue Seide! Veilchenblaue Seide!’

A rumour went round that when the young couple had left the girls would form a circle round one of the older guests, who would be blindfolded. She would have the bridal wreath and put it on the head of one of the girls while they were dancing round her, singing a merry song.

The recipient of the wreath would be destined to be the next bride. Fortunately the custom was not observed; I was afraid that I would be the one to be crowned with the wreath,

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to the amusement of all. An embarrassing experience! I had a strong premonition that I would be the first to marry, anyway, and it proved justified!

From Arolsen we went to Schwarzburg in Thuringia, to rest and to enjoy the mountain air, and as it turned out to meet Hendrik. Schwarzburg was just an hotel situated halfway down a rocky peninsula washed by the river Schwarza. On the tip of the peninsula lies the old castle of the Prince of Schwarzburg-Rudolstadt, whose family used to spend the autumn there. The principality had existed unchanged since the Middle Ages, always under the same House.

Thuringia is a mountainous country, covered with forests; in the valleys there are lush meadows, favourite grazing-ground for big game. It is ideal country for hunting. During our visit the Prince and his wife were away; staying at the castle were Hendrik's grandmother (his mother was a Princess of Schwarzburg) and her unmarried daughter Theckla.

One day we heard that Duke Hendrik van Mecklenburg had arrived on a visit to his grandmother. A day or two later he came to pay his respects, and when we returned the visit of the old Princess and Theckla we saw him again. Theckla invited us both to a picnic on their *Fasänerie*. We enjoyed the walk and the picnic itself so much that we began to consider the idea of walking hand in hand through life.

When he had left, a few days later, we had dinner with Grandmother Schwarzburg. I missed him very much, although it was a pleasant evening. The dinner took place in the medieval dining-room and many ancient customs were observed. One felt completely in the past. When there were guests the enormous trumpet-glasses, more than three feet high, were brought out for the champagne and those who were present for the first time received a heavy wooden block round their necks, on top of which was put a large hen made of gold from the Schwarza river. The head of the hen was then removed and the new guest had to drink from it and finish the contents if he could. Fortunately this was not expected of me. After dinner we all signed the historic book of the Schwarza hen.

After our holiday we returned home to Soestdijk. It was a tense summer; for a long time nothing was heard from Hendrik. But I was not only waiting. I also felt a growing sense of responsibility for a decision which would affect not only myself but also have its significance for my people. At last came his request for a further meeting. It was agreed; we were to meet at Aunt Lily's house at König in the Odenwald, Grand Duchy of Hesse. We went there after the opening of the States-General. My future husband had taken rooms at Höchst, a few miles away. We spent a few days talking quietly, until we were disturbed by journalists, in spite of his strict incognito. Hendrik thought it necessary to leave Höchst; the risk of rumours about our engagement circulating in the Press before I had taken a decision should be avoided at all cost.

He was then invited by the Erbachs to come and stay at König, where we would have the opportunity to talk in private. On the 12th of October he came to luncheon. After the meal the others withdrew and left us alone. Ten minutes later we returned and announced our engagement. The die was cast. What a relief that always is on these occasions!

We parted soon afterwards, for the official engagement had to take place at home. On the fifteenth, shortly after Hendrik's departure, Mother and I returned to Holland, for he was expected at Het Loo on the sixteenth. He was met officially at the station by General Dumonceau. A wonderful autumn followed. We interrupted our stay at Het Loo for our entry into The Hague. I was not allowed to go to Schwerin before the wedding, as tradition demanded that the Dukes should make a festive entry with their young wives. So that awaited me later.

In the meantime my future husband had to introduce me to his mother. To save her the long journey to Holland, we agreed to meet at Lensahn, in Holstein, an estate belonging to the Grand Duke of Oldenburg, the husband of Hendrik's sister Elisabeth. A large family reunion took place on this occasion, for many others wanted to meet the new member of the family. It was a great event for me.

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Hendrik spent Christmas and New Year's Eve in Holland. A new century began; what would it bring us?

The next time Hendrik came to Holland was a few days before our wedding on the 7th February 1901.

It was a magnificent wedding. Many members of both families were present and the whole country rejoiced in our happiness. We received splendid presents, including the golden coach, offered to me by Amsterdam in 1898, which was finished just in time.

My husband had spent most of his youth at Steinfeld, returning to Schwerin only for the winters. He had always been a countryman. As a boy he was fond of rowing, he shot grebes and mergansers on the lake and drove the four-in-hand before the farm waggon at harvest-time. When he was older his parents allowed him to go out shooting in the woods. In the autumn following his confirmation he shot his first deer. He had a great love of the forests, and he also loved the deer that live in them and the roes in the fields. Although he liked his shooting, his temperament was not primarily a hunter's. What he loved best was to spend long hours in the woods, observing the life and habits of the deer.

Although he rode on horseback occasionally, he was first and foremost a whip. As a young officer he was known for his greys, which he always drove four-in-hand. They were usually 'juckers', 'Lippizaner', very fast horses.

When he had finished his primary education, his mother sent him to the Gymnasium in Dresden, and he saw her only during the holidays.

His father, Grand Duke Friedrich Franz II, had died when Hendrik was in his infancy and had been succeeded by his eldest son (by his first marriage), Friedrich Franz III, Fritz's father. My husband was the youngest child of my parents-in-law.

After his school-leaving examination and his confirmation, at the age of seventeen, he made a long tour through Greece, the Middle East and India, accompanied by his tutor.

On his return he began to prepare for his commission in the Garde Jäger, a regiment that had his preference because of its



A fiord *Crayon and water-colour painting by the author*



A fir-tree *Oil-painting by the author*

traditional connection with the woods and the chase, which was symbolized by their green uniforms.

He bought a villa in Potsdam which he furnished very comfortably and attractively, using the trophies he had brought back from his tour. The house became known to his friends as the 'Rüsselpalais', after the elephants' heads that adorned its walls. These possessions caused a new sensation when they arrived in this country; they were installed in his room, to which they lent a very special charm. He left Potsdam when he had been appointed to a post in the Mecklenburg finance ministry, and went to live in Schwerin—the idea was that he should assist his nephew Fritz during the first years of his reign.

After this sketch of his youth there will be no need to explain where Hendrik felt at home in this country and what his first interests were: the extension of our woods in Gelderland, the clearing of heathland elsewhere in the country and the work of the Heath Society. His activity contributed to the conversion of large tracts of heathland into woods. He also reorganized our coach-stable, introduced a new method of driving and often gave lessons on the driving-seat.

We also improved the park. His knowledge of forestry in general and of reforestation was considerable. Of course he loved to pass his time in the woods and to shoot, in the spirit that I have described.

He had a kind and open nature and was always willing to help. Simplicity was his first characteristic. He was simple in his manner, in his tastes, in his character.

When we left on our honeymoon our mothers accompanied us as far as the door of the palace in The Hague, and they followed their radiant children with their eyes until they disappeared from sight. For them this happy moment was also a tragic one. They had to detach themselves from their children and watch them go out into the world without their protection. At such a time a child can be almost cruel to the mother who has surrounded it with so much care and love, and behave very selfishly, ignoring the suffering it causes.

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We spent our honeymoon at Het Loo. What a happy time it was! We furnished our rooms and went out walking together, in spite of the cold. I remember a walk on the heath with Mr Tutein Nolthenius, the steward of the Royal Domains, when we established the course of the roads that were to be dug across the fields at Hoog-Soeren. I often accompanied Hendrik when he went out to watch the deer; sometimes he did a little shooting, while I stayed behind in the carriage.

Apart from his furniture and his hunting trophies he had also brought with him his horses: the greys and the riding-horses. How much I enjoyed our first drives! And they never lost their charm during the thirty-three years of our married life. It was so delightful and there was always something to see.

Because Hendrik loved the woods so much we often went out even when he was not shooting. We did not always keep to the roads, we often drove across the fields, heading straight for our goal. He was such a good whip that we always arrived safely. He demanded absolute obedience from his greys, who were subjected to a severe training.

As I write down these recollections, I remember my drives with Hendrik and Juliana in later years. Sometimes we took a picnic lunch and spent the entire afternoon in the open air. How enjoyable and relaxing it was, after strenuous work.

It was a great day for me when Hendrik and I went out each driving our own four-in-hand; he had his greys, I had the bays. Side by side we drove down the Wiessel road; it was a wonderful sight. He had taught me his driving method, which turned out to be much more efficient than the one I had first practised. Several four-in-hands had been presented to me; the bays were the last.

In winter he drove me almost daily from The Hague to the Horsten, where we took our walks. In the evenings, when the day's work was done, I spent unforgettable hours with him in his apartments.

While I am writing about my husband, I should not forget his faithful dachshund, Helga, which followed him like a

shadow. On the rare occasions when she had gone out on a chase of her own he returned her faithfulness by a search which lasted until he had found her, by day or by night.

From time to time Hendrik invited people to a shooting-party. My role on such occasions was usually limited to that of hostess at the dinner. These dinners had a charm all their own; I was greatly amused by the 'tall' hunting stories I heard.

Sometimes I accompanied him on battues; but I have never fired a shot, not even at a target!

Of course we had many official obligations, in all seasons: dinners, audiences and so on.

It is in the nature of things that a young woman who has left her parental home wants to become independent of her parents. Her strongest desire is to share fully in her husband's life, to do everything to make it comfortable and to satisfy all his wishes and pleasures. For me this was made much more difficult by what I have called the cage, which not only banned and prevented all the things that lend charm to life but also created an oppressive moral climate in which we nevertheless had to live. Thus my struggle and problems were more complicated than most people's, but I was determined that my husband should lead the life he wanted. The recognition of this problem meant a turning-point in my life. I sought and found my freedom of action, not always without causing shocks. My inner freedom I had achieved years before.

We took less and less notice of the conventions of the cage and went our own way, arousing a great deal of friction and criticism.

Early that year we made our entry into Amsterdam, and were received by an enthusiastic population. In May our entry into Schwerin followed. We were welcomed by our young nephew Friedrich Franz IV, known in the family as Fritzzi, whose first official act it was upon attaining his majority. The festivities concerned our visit as well as his accession to the throne.

Mecklenburg is a very different country from our own: thinly populated, rich in hills and lakes, corn-fields and

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forests. The inhabitants were deeply attached to their national independence and were averse to Prussian domination. A kind and faithful people.

The town of Schwerin is splendidly situated on the lake of the same name, and there are several smaller lakes in or just outside the town. The castle lay on a peninsula overlooking the lake. On the land side it was surrounded by a wide circle of official buildings, government offices, the theatre and so on. The theatre belonged to the Grand Duke, who had his own companies for drama as well as opera, and his own orchestra, so that at times of official receptions or national celebrations the requirements could always be met.

From Schwerin we drove by carriage along the lake to my mother-in-law's house, where we would stay for some time. It was an hour's drive from Schwerin to Rabensteinfeld, or Steinfeld as we called it. The house was on top of a steep hill overlooking the lake; from Mama's room one could see Schwerin castle in the distance. The hills bordering the lake, covered with a splendid old beech wood, went on for miles. Behind the house the country was also hilly, but it was mainly grassland with an old oak here and there. A few cottages formed the hamlet of Steinfeld, inhabited by the labourers of the farm. Steinfeld itself had originally been an Inspektor's house, and had later been extended to form a manor house. It stood at one end of the village, as was usual in Mecklenburg.

Mama always left everybody completely free and Steinfeld was known as the place where one could do exactly as one pleased. No wonder Mama's children all loved it, and what an experience for me: to do just as I liked. I enjoyed everything to the full. My husband took me to all his favourite spots. We rode a great deal and sometimes went out on horseback to visit friends. We also made long tours by carriage. Long distances were no problem to the horses, nearly all the roads were sandy tracks.

Sometimes we went out on the lake by boat and watched the magnificent sunsets. Fritz surprised Mama and us by coming home in an entirely new type of vehicle: an automobile. This was the first one I ever saw, and I trembled when

my husband accepted the invitation for a ride. It all seemed so strange and of course Fritz was not yet a very accomplished driver, nor was he a careful one. The new vehicle did not appear at home until later.

From Steinfeld we paid a short visit to the Kaiser and Empress at Potsdam and Berlin, and then returned home after six unforgettable weeks with Mama, who became the sweetest of mothers-in-law to me. I was greeted by the elections and a cabinet crisis, my first. Pierson's government was succeeded by one formed by Dr Kuyper.

I should make it clear that it is not my intention to discuss further government changes and elections, and that I shall not write about the problems of my task in connection with them. These subjects are outside the scope of my book. I shall only say that then as later I invoked God's help for the accomplishment of this task.

One event of that busy year 1901 should be mentioned: a short leave in Holland of General Van Heutsz, whose pacification of Atjeh had achieved such good results that he considered it allowable to leave his post for a little time.

I have already said that, at the time of her Regency, Mother allowed me to read reports concerning the progress of military expeditions in the Netherlands East Indies. These had given me an idea of the different phases of the war in Atjeh under General Van Heutsz. I had read detailed accounts of expeditions carried out under his command, and knew how strongly he inspired his officers and men; what will-power and tenacity he brought to his job, and how much talent he devoted to the pacification and economic development of Atjeh. It gave me particular pleasure to receive this man in person and to hear him describe his work and achievements. He himself and a few officers of his staff were our guests at Het Loo.

Van Heutsz was later to become Governor-General. After his swearing-in ceremony I arranged with him that he would let me know when officers came on leave who had distinguished themselves in his service, so that we could receive

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them. How stimulating the company of those men always was. Tropical warfare had made them practical and determined; moreover they had the courage to accept responsibility. They usually held civil as well as military authority in their district and they showed a lively awareness of the needs of the local population, which they served with a wide knowledge of men and conditions and a strong sense of justice.

In 1899 and 1907 the two so-called Peace Conferences took place in The Hague, the first on the initiative of Czar Nicholas of Russia.

I had little hope that conventions agreed at peace conferences would be observed in the case of a serious conflict, although I had not imagined the extent to which they would be ignored in the near future! The only lasting result of the conferences was the Permanent Court of Arbitration, which was housed in the Peace Palace in The Hague. In 1913 the palace was opened and the court installed. We attended the ceremony and inspected the new building, a gift from Andrew Carnegie. Many costly presents had been received from individuals and governments. Thus the Argentine government had sent a reduced cast of 'Le Christ des Andes', a symbol of peace which had been put up in the mountains between Argentina and Chile after the bloodless settlement of a conflict between the two countries. I found this statue on the third-floor landing, while all the other valuable presents had found a place on the first floor. When I asked for an explanation I was told that non-Christian countries like Japan and others had to be considered. The Peace Palace was the property of all the nations and the Permanent Court was international. Then, as now, I had no use for this cowardly neutrality, which had led to a disregard of the high meaning and symbolism of the present. There would have been two possibilities: either to give it a place of honour, with the argument that the palace stood in a country the majority of whose population were Christians and that the sculpture itself had a great symbolic meaning, or to refuse it altogether on account of the international character of the palace. The courage was

lacking to adopt a definite course, and the statue was put as far as possible out of sight.

A group of Argentine ladies who had presented the gift were among the many people I received at the time. When they asked me for a signature on my portrait I added *Christ avant tout*, convinced that we at least understood each other.

It seems probable that they showed the portrait to their Press. The words became known, although nobody was aware of their true origin.

Mother, having acquainted herself with what would now be known as 'social work' at Arolsen, had begun to extend a helping hand to the families of Father's workers as soon as she had come to live at Het Loo after her marriage. The steward's wife visited the families and told Mother about the conditions. She gave help whenever necessary; she considered every case on its own merits and decided personally which form of assistance would be most useful.

Having been used to this from childhood, I naturally took over her task when Mother left Het Loo for good. After the purchase of large tracts of forest and heathland, shortly after our marriage, many new employees were taken on and the work increased considerably. At the same time there were more houses to be looked after; and housing conditions in this part of the country were backward in those days. I soon realized that the work Mother had begun should aim at a balance between the interests of the village populations which depended on us for their employment on the one hand and of the land-owning employers, on the other.

The steward's second wife—the first Mrs Van Steyn had died—was the person who discussed the problems and needs of the people with me, conveyed their wishes to me and helped them in my name. She was entirely devoted to their interests. When she died her place was taken by Miss Anna Schoch.

In order to improve hygienic conditions and the general level of family life, to tend the sick and to give spiritual help to all, several sisters' homes were founded and sisters appointed, or rather selected. The first requirement was that they

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should have the confidence of the villagers, not least in spiritual matters. Conditions were quite primitive at first, a setting for a true pioneering job to improve health, provide a basic education and strengthen public spirit. Once the sisters' home was there, the next object was to find a room that could become the centre of village life and serve as a classroom for courses on various subjects which were held at the request of the people themselves. For the female section of the population, the educative work was also done by the sisters, in addition to their daily task.

Although originally all this was simpler than the welfare work organized by the Queen's Commissioner for Drente, Mr Linthorst Homan, when in later years he set out to modernize his province, there was also a marked similarity. In both cases the aim was to increase gradually the responsibility of those concerned; to educate them to self-government.

At first I financed everything myself, but later on a contribution was asked from the people themselves, to stimulate their interest.

The houses needed a great deal of improvement. I had them altered to suit the size and composition of the families living in them. When children grew up, or when their number increased, rooms were added. When there was a T.B. patient, an attic room was built which let in the maximum of light and air, and permitted isolation from the rest of the family. All this was done under the expert supervision of the sisters of the district concerned.

This work acquainted me with problems that presented themselves everywhere in the society of the time, often on a much bigger scale. I frequently went to see things for myself, and in the course of my visits to the sick and the needy I soon became convinced that, necessary though material assistance was in many ways, spiritual help was often even more important, to bring a lasting relief which was urgently wanted.

I myself have profited greatly by the patience and the faith and devotion I encountered on those visits and in our conversations. My experience was similar to that of many others who have found themselves spiritually enriched

after a visit to people stricken by illness or other forms of misery.

As I said, we spent our winters in The Hague, from November to April or May. I always missed my visits during those months.

While I am on the subject of Het Loo I want to mention the work begun in 1898 in an attempt to restore the interior of the house to its state at the time of Stadtholder William III. I made good use of a book by Daniel Marot, the architect of Het Loo, a Huguenot refugee who had entered William III's service. I found a painter who was able and willing to go and study seventeenth-century form and colour at Versailles. This was Mr Fabry of Rotterdam.

The original paintings had been covered with new coats of paint which were now removed. There was great excitement every time a new head or a figure appeared, revealing the living reality of one of the designs in Marot's book. It was no less exciting than the discovery of archaeological objects by Professor Holwerda, who undertook excavations in the grounds during the first years of the century. He was not disappointed in his hopes of finding prehistoric relics. Needless to say, we took a lively interest in his work.

One fine summer's day we ourselves took a spade and started digging to restore the moat round the old castle at Het Loo, which the French troops had filled up, leaving only a narrow gulley. Others continued our work and the moat returned to roughly its former state.

Several other matters demanded attention: the walls and the interior of the old castle also had to be restored. We confided the work to the well-known architect, Cuypers senior. It took a long time and in fact is not yet finished: the castle still awaits furnishing in medieval style.

When fragments of sixteenth-century frescoes, a rare discovery in our country, were found in the old castle, our interest in past ages was intensified.

I shall not discuss the railway strike of 1903, which lies outside the scope of this book. I only mention it because it has

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strongly affected the course of my development, as the Guidance in my life made me understand by this event that life in all its forms is only preserved from disasters when it is seen in the light of God. I found a strength of conviction that had been lacking before. The principle was established which from then on has dominated my thoughts and actions.

Many facts and events could be recorded of the years between 1902 and 1914, but their enumeration would only bore the reader.

We toured through the country a great deal, paid visits to the capital and to many other towns, saw important factories and institutions, et cetera. We received a great many people and went to other countries on official visits. In short, we were kept constantly busy.

I wrote my speeches myself. I always tried to say something in them, and to adapt the contents to the people I addressed. I had no use for stereotyped speeches turned out by the yard.

On the whole our programme differed little from one year to the next.

Calm though they were, the first years of the new century were far from easy for us. There was no more maternal protection for me; life now presented itself to us in all its grimness. It was a period of painful experiences which prepared me for the task that my later life was to set; experiences which were also of great benefit to Hendrik.

We usually took our holiday in autumn, at Steinfeld, where I stayed all the time, while my husband occasionally went off for the day to shoot deer in the country around Ludwigslust.

Afterwards when he had bought the estate of Dobbin we spent part of our holiday there. We always tried to organize a family reunion at Dobbin; the estate included extensive woods where members of the family and others used to go shooting. Like all country-houses in Mecklenburg, Dobbin stood on the short side of the yard; on the long side were the

farm-buildings. The farm was quite a big one; there were hundreds of cows, several flocks of sheep, dozens of horses and from forty to seventy foals.

The surrounding countryside was strikingly beautiful: a small park which passed into the fields and the grassy hills with magnificent oak trees here and there. In the distance one saw the lake with the island; in summer our cattle, wading and swimming, made their way there to graze. A large part of the lake belonged to Dobbin; it was quite twenty minutes by motor-boat before we reached the end of the estate. There was also a village, inhabited by our people, and a little country church.

We invited people whom we could expect to share our tastes and pleasures. We were all relatively young and we enjoyed our holidays immensely. I have particularly good memories of the cheerful companionship with my youthful ladies. What fun we had together!

In 1907 an event occurred which changed the relations between my husband and our people. In a heavy storm the *Berlin*, one of the ships of the Harwich service, ran aground on the pier at the Hook of Holland and broke in two. Hendrik went there immediately to see if he could help, and he found a task waiting for him. He did not take part in the technical rescue work, but he was a source of moral strength for the others. Up till then his true character had been little known; he was so very modest and never sought the limelight. Suddenly people found out what his character was, and he was enthusiastically received on his return.

He became a staunch friend of the lifeboatmen and the Lifeboat Society and remained so until his death. When the presidency of the Netherlands Red Cross fell vacant, I appointed him to the post. As president he worked hard to prepare the organization for its task in war-time and did everything in his power to stimulate its growth and development. He received many visitors in his office. Everybody could come to him with their problems, and many took the opportunity. With inexhaustible patience, always willing to help and to support, he listened to people's troubles. His whole heart

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was in his work; he had such an intense desire to help to alleviate suffering.

He also joined and took an active part in the Boy Scout movement.

The countryman in him continued to exist, but his new interests gave him so much work that he spent most of his time in town.

Many older inhabitants of The Hague remember him walking to the Red Cross office in the mornings, from the palace in the Noordeinde to the Prinsessegracht, invariably accompanied by our little friend, the dachshund Helga. His attachment to Helga shows clearly in the words that he had put on her tombstone:

Here lies my faithful dog,
in whom all virtues were united.
If 't could be said that dogs are friends,
then lieth here my friend most true.

At last 1909 arrived, and our daughter Juliana was born. How did we decide on her name? It happened in the following way. A few years before the birth of my daughter one of my former playmates returned to The Hague with her husband, after many years spent moving from one garrison to another. They had rented a house in a new part of town, in a street called Juliana van Stolberglaan. When I visited them there, I was set thinking about this ancestress. Years had passed since I studied history, and my recollection of Juliana van Stolberg had dimmed; the visit revived them. I remembered clearly what Mother had told me about her, when we had our talks about personalities who had left a mark on their times, and I was reminded of all that William the Silent's mother had done for the national cause. So it came about that, when in the early months of 1909 we had to give serious thought to the problem of naming our child, we decided on Juliana for a girl. If it should be a boy, Willem was a possibility, but not a very attractive one on its own after so many Willems in the family. I had always admired Lodewijk van Nassau, Juliana's third son and William the Silent's right hand, because of his

generous character and his special relationship with his mother. In the end we decided on Willem Lodewijk for a boy. An added argument was that these names had been borne by the Friesian Stadtholder of Prince Maurice's day, who helped him in the preparation of his campaigns and who was known in his province as '*us heit*' (our father). We decided that our son would also be known as '*us heit*' in daily life.

But Juliana it was. The name caused considerable surprise in the country when my husband registered it. We had hoped to welcome her as a birthday present for him, on the 19th of April, but we had to wait another eleven days. We stayed in The Hague until after the christening.

One of the letters I received that winter gave me particular pleasure. Accompanied by a pale-blue belt embroidered with oranges, the family emblem, it contained an appreciation of Juliana van Stolberg's personality and of her work for the country. Juliana has worn the belt many times.

She was a strong and healthy child, always a little in advance of her age in intelligence and knowledge. I must leave it to the reader to imagine our parental happiness at her arrival after we had waited for eight years. Of course she changed our life in many ways. In summer and autumn I considered myself exempt from many duties which had no direct bearing on my official task. As soon as I had a moment free, I lived only for my child.

Little can be said about Juliana's first years that would interest the reader. For a mother such years are rich in happy memories. The care and upbringing of a child were not as simple then as today; we made much more fuss. To Mother this grandchild meant a source of joy. It brought back for her the time when I was a baby. She always surrounded Juliana with love and devoted attention, and she received a deep love in return.

Nineteen-thirteen was a year of commemoration. The whole country celebrated the centenary of the liberation from French domination. The festivities culminated at Scheveningen, when the arrival of my great-grandfather, William I, from his exile in England, was re-enacted on the beach. For

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us this was the year when we looked back gratefully on our twelve and a half years' marriage. At that time we occupied a house in the town of Apeldoorn. Het Loo was uninhabitable because of the rebuilding that was going on. Unfortunately the improvements have not enhanced its beauty. I often feel a strong nostalgia for the house as it was in my youth.

At any rate it was a change to have a party in a private home of average size. For Juliana and the servants with their children there was a circus performance on the driveway in front of the stables, and afterwards there were games. A circle was formed round us and Juliana was put in the middle because she would show the manners to the others in a game called 'such are our manners'. I can still see her standing there, completely at ease and without any sign of shyness, showing the manners to the circle. These are unforgettable memories.

It was in the same year, at the time of the opening of the States-General, that we first stayed at the Huis ten Bosch in The Hague. In many ways it was like living in a tent rather than a house. No one had lived there since Queen Sophie, my father's first wife, had died in 1877. The house was furnished in the worst possible taste, and signs of decay were everywhere.

We considered ourselves lucky if we could find one oil-lamp for each room. The walls of these rooms one should imagine padded with a dusty woollen material, in the same way as the chairs. The colours were dark, red or blue. It was too frightful for words.

During the winter of 1914 we had the house furnished according to our taste, little suspecting that it was soon to be our home for a long period.

The old house and its large garden form a unity of irresistible charm. A prolonged stay permits new discoveries every day, of architectural beauty indoors or of natural beauty outside the window. No one could remain insensitive to the feeling of olden times that permeates everything.

The garden is ringed in by moats, which are spanned by bridges, so one lives on an island, a condition that always appeals to the imagination. There is an abundant natural vegetation in the garden, characteristic of the peat-soil of the

region. In spring this gave particular delight, when the house was surrounded by anemones and other wild flowers as far as the eye could reach.

We had rowing-boats and often toured round our island on the water. We also made trips to our country estate, the Horsten. It took about an hour and a half to get there by canals and lakes.

It will be easy to imagine how much the oldness of it all enthralled me as the lady of the manor. I was grateful not only for living in these historic surroundings, but also for my responsibility to preserve so much beauty. There were wonderful moments every time I discovered some old detail or object that had to be restored; at such moments I came completely under the spell of the past.

I shall never forget the months we spent there, in very different circumstances, sometimes with long intervals from one stay to the next, between 1913 and 1948. The Huis ten Bosch was not only the background to my struggles, it was itself an element in those struggles. The spirit of the house frequently influenced me in a positive sense.

At this point I want to say something about the part I think the Divine Guidance played in the preparation for my task during the first fourteen years of the century.

Before I start I should point out that I am in complete sympathy with the constitutional form of government and that I support all the guarantees of liberty that the constitution offers.

In the following discussion of the development of my personality, I am thinking of my development as a human being, not as a constitutional monarch. This development the constitution admits, and even expects; without it the political and constitutional duties could not be adequately performed.

When I try to see myself as an outsider whose inner motives I know, in order to arrive at as objective as possible a picture for others as well as for myself, I grow silent with respect and admiration for God's wisdom.

It makes no difference whether we contemplate a corner of

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nature and, absorbed by its beauty, recognize the work of the Creator, or consider His work in the shaping of a personality. Both show a growth which is Divine execution of a Divine plan. In the years now under discussion I can discern a few general lines which indicate God's plan for my life and the way in which He directed me. They can be summarized as follows:

In the first place I acquired the consciousness of being God's child through Christ. Secondly my moral courage developed and I came to understand how it should be served by the power of my will. Finally I sought and found a method to break out of the cage in which we lived—only the time was not yet ripe for a thorough application of this method.

Now for the first of these subjects. I have already referred to the awakening of my faith, to the inner struggle that followed Plateau's experiment and the subsequent recovery of my faith. Truths that for many people do not become living reality until they are much older, God made me discover at an early age, through struggle and resistance against the unacceptable, without human help, all alone, yet not alone, for there was always His powerful invisible help. Later on I understood that He was always there to keep watch over me and protect me.

Much was still lacking. Doubt had inspired a firm resolution, 'never again!', but I had no clear directive for my spiritual life. The content of my faith had to be greatly enriched, and this happened only gradually, by the way of one experience after another.

I believed in God and like many others had formed a paternal image of Him. Of Christ however I had no image and I doubted if I could ever approach Him by the way I had been shown, of human intelligence. Afterwards I was to understand that He is not to be found thus, that one can only approach Him through direct experience.

The decisive turning-point in those years was my discovery of His image, which is present in every human being, however faint it may be. It was the discovery that there is a sacred spark in us which comes from Him. A heavy burden fell off



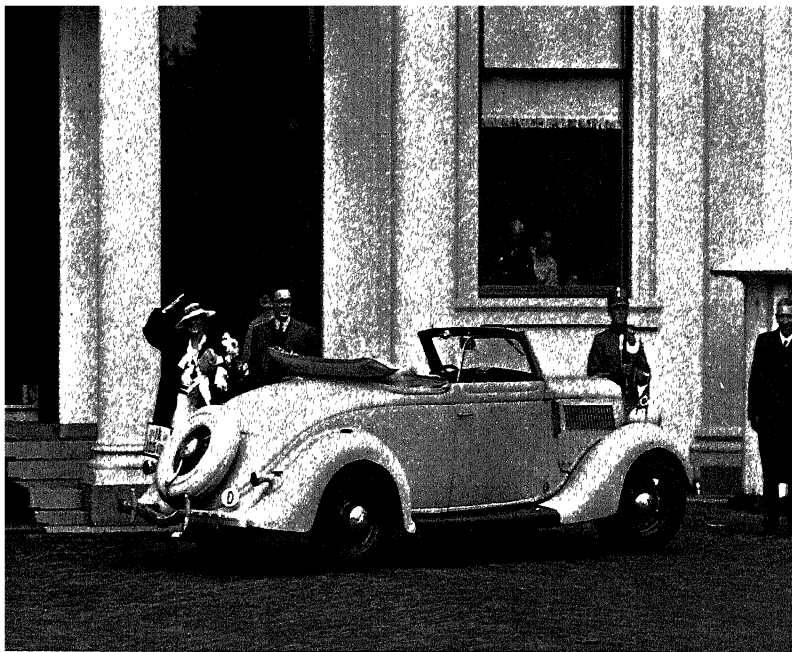
Verenigde Fotobureaux, Amsterdam

the Hendrik's white funeral, July 1934

Ziegler, The Hague



In white



Polygoon, Haan

Princess Juliana and Prince Bernhard in front of the palace of Noordeinde,
September 1936

The Royal Family after Princess Margriet's christening in Canada, 1943

Anefo, Amster.



me when I became aware of this. It opened the way for His entry into my life as the Guide.

In these years a deep desire was fulfilled for stability, for a profounder spiritual life, for a conscious union with God in Christ. This desire was so strong that the performance of my task seemed impossible to me without its fulfilment.

As soon as I had a moment for myself my thoughts were occupied with these matters, guided by my spiritual reading.

It was an old custom to go to the Walloon church in The Hague in winter. Fortunately more and more ministers from France, Switzerland and Italy were invited to speak there. One of them was Frank Thomas, the well-known Swiss preacher, who proclaimed the Gospel in a Genevan concert-hall where he assembled a large audience of people, from many nations and different walks of life, who had drifted helplessly on the sea of life, even anarchists. He paid annual visits for six or seven years. I was deeply impressed by his words, which I heard from the pulpit as well as in his *conférences* and his private talks with us. He brought active Christianity with his whole person, by his attitude to life, his radiant faith and his utter devotion to Christ. This was living Christianity, because it was fully supported by a personal experience of Christ, because one noticed in everything that he knew Christ directly. He transmitted something of his inspiration to me; I was won over by this way of following Christ and trying to do His will. From then on he was *the* Goal for me. Christ's meaning in the Sermon on the Mount in particular began to live for me. He had lighted the beacons; it was now up to my resolve and will to follow His course. The way with Him was full of stumbling-blocks, but gradually a new life appeared.

Others besides Thomas who influenced my spiritual life included Balmas of the Waldenses and Saillens, the grey-haired Baptist from Paris. I spent much time reading and reflecting on Thomas's books and those of well-known French preachers.

In the sermons of my countrymen, however interesting and eloquent they were, I always recognized the different denominations, and to my mind this implied a limitation of the profundity and fullness of our contact with God and

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showed insufficient awareness of the fact that we are all united round His Person.

My faith and love for Christ were subjected to many tests in the course of my life. The first test was the decisive one. In difficult circumstances I was confronted with an inescapable choice: to remain true to Him at a time when it demanded a sacrifice, or to give in to temptation, even for only a moment. I recognized clearly that it would be shameful to follow Him in prosperity and to deny Him in adversity; to forget one's vow when it demanded self-abnegation, to argue: that is not how I meant my promise to follow Him. To forsake this loyalty, the highest and best thing in us—I could not even bear to think of what one would be after such an irreparable rupture. After a struggle I made the sacrifice and chose to do Christ's will.

It had been an important lesson. This experience became the silent force that from then on worked in me at all times. Peace, joy and satisfaction were its fruits.

The influences on my spiritual development were not confined to the preachers and their writings. My craving for spiritual growth and spiritual nourishment was irresistible, and I was keen on anything that held out a promise of spiritual enrichment. I want to mention just one more experience.

In some way, I do not remember how, I came into possession of a short description of a religious revival in Norway, which had manifested itself most forcibly in the prisons and had caused a revolution in the prisoners' behaviour and feelings. They discussed their new life from cell to cell and the prison resounded with their song:

There is sunshine in my soul today,
The darkness has receded,
And earth and heaven smile at me,
For Jesus is my light.

There is sunshine, summer sunshine,
All the day consists of joy;
When I see the face of Jesus,
Heaven glows within me.

The Early Years of the New Century

Songs of praise are in my soul,
And rejoicing for the Lord,
And all this makes my heart so full,
That I can find no words.

There is sunshine, summer sunshine,
All the day consists of joy,
When I see the face of Jesus,
Heaven glows within me.

(After a Dutch translation from the Norwegian, made by Juliana
when she was an undergraduate.)

This little book inspired my profound interest in the nineteenth-century revival in our own country. Of course I was aware that the forms it had taken were obsolete, but the faith that was demanded of us was the same that burned in these people. The study of this subject added a valuable supplement to my education and acquainted me with aspects of life which had been unknown to me. The reader will understand that it took several years, as my official duties left me little time.

Looking back on those days now, I can see that my faith was still confined to a narrow course. I did not take into account that Christ is universal, and is therefore constantly and universally working on mankind, regardless of human systems and divisions. It was a considerable time before I attained to that degree of understanding, although the limitations that prevented me from taking a broader view were different from those one encounters in so many church people. Of course I did not recognize them as limitations; if I had I would certainly have corrected them. In later years I became acutely conscious of my narrow view of the Bible, but once again my case was different from that of many church people.

Mission work in its widest sense had a much stronger attraction for me than the Church, was much more closely related to my own spiritual experience. Its great possibilities and great problems appealed particularly to me. Professor De Groot cannot have foreseen that his lectures would lay

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the foundations for a strong interest in the work of the missions. I followed their activities closely, as a private person of course.

I had soon acquired the conviction that faith knows no national boundaries. This also applied to the missions. Ignoring their divisions, I saw their work as one single attempt to carry out Christ's command before the Ascension throughout the world.

Reports from the Edinburgh conference opened my eyes to important new perspectives and to the vast problems that confronted Christendom. When the continuation committee that had been set up met at 'Oud-Wassenaar', outside The Hague, we invited some of its prominent members to Het Loo. Among them were John Mott, the soul of the movement, Söderblom from Sweden, Temple from England and our countryman Gunning. My relations with the World Mission date from that time. I was always kept informed of its problems and decisions. Of course I was all in favour of an affiliation of the Dutch mission to the World Mission.

In my view the international mission conferences have been of great significance, and not only for the development of missionary work. They have played a leading part in the effort to make Christians everywhere conscious of their unity. It should be remembered that international conferences were less frequent in those days, and that the ideal of Christian unity had not yet aroused so much interest.

At the conferences Christian unity was made apparent and all shared the experience of Christ's presence. Mott and his friends cherished the dream of a union of all churches as a fulfilment of the work begun by the oecumenical organizations. I took a lively interest in the attempts to realize this dream. In 1948 at last the World Council of Churches was founded in Amsterdam. Not all the churches joined it and there is still a long way to go, but at least a first step has been taken.

Now for my second point, moral courage. I said before that my youth was spent in a time so utterly devoid of energy that the present-day reader could not even imagine it any more.

Life was a pond without a ripple and all we were expected to do was to keep it so. There was no opportunity to show vigour and courage, nor did we see any examples of those qualities.

The first foundations for my moral courage were laid in the talks with Mother. She pointed out how valuable and indispensable it is. But the time was not ripe for an application of this lesson, which was continued afterwards when I read the reports on military expeditions in Atjeh and elsewhere, which illustrated the courage of the soldiers and described their deeds in detail. I received these from Mother at the age when the imagination is most susceptible to examples of valour and heroism.

Then there was the visit of Van Heutsz with his staff—my meeting with the powerful reality of life. They were doing a truly magnificent job; so there were great things to be done, there were tasks that required more than punctuality and devotion. A new world was revealed to me. But what could I do with this inspiration? The way of these men could not be mine. Then it occurred to me that I should transpose the qualities that they displayed on the battle-field into such as could be useful in my field of activity, and no sooner had I had this idea than my mind was made up: I was to be somebody who performed her task with moral courage and applied her will-power to that purpose. It was the end of my uncertainty and of the feeling that nothing was worth doing. Even within the limits set by the constitution it was possible to do something of value, as long as I really wanted it and persevered courageously. From then on this resolve worked like a leaven in me. My will had to be trained and to learn to be the tool of Christ, in all things great and small, without becoming a law unto itself. It had to be taught to co-operate with moral courage.

Finally the third point: the attempt to find a way out of the 'cage' and its success. I said before that when I had attained my majority frequent clashes occurred with members of the court, a fate that was of course always shared by my husband. At first they were only superficial skirmishes. We ignored

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their profound causes, not surprisingly when one considers our age at the time. It was only afterwards that we began to reflect on their origin.

Those who wanted to maintain the cage told us only facts they considered suitable; all others were withheld from us, however important. Behind this was the desire to insulate us from the real life of the nation, to keep up an artificial barrier. This I could not accept.

As I became more and more acutely conscious of the solitude of the cage, I began to long for human contact. I wanted to meet people as they really were, not dressed up for a visit at the palace. In the end I was almost obsessed by my solitude. I no longer ignored the profounder causes and gradually a clear image of how things could be different emerged through the semi-darkness of the cage, although I did not yet see what I could do to make it a reality. Only in a few rare instances could I carry my ideas into practice.

On official visits I sometimes managed to take an hour off for informal talks with people. Sometimes an opportunity presented itself when I went to inspect new housing developments. I told the authorities that I should like to visit a few of the new houses, and as a contrast some of the old ones, and made the condition that we should enter unaccompanied. On such occasions my main purpose was to have a real talk with the families.

After floods and other disasters we always went to see people in their homes and made them tell us about their problems and needs. We adapted ourselves fully to the circumstances. Another means I used to come to know our people was by organizing meetings with representatives of different classes of society. I insisted that all those taking part should express their views without restraint.

Before 1914 the objection against my ideas was that they would have caused commotion and even storms in a pond that everybody was used to seeing without the smallest ripple! This attachment to a state of somnolence prevented me from adopting a new course. The people and the times were not ready for it. As soon as people had got used to the idea that things could not always remain as they were, as

soon as during and after the First World War society had begun to move, we found appreciation for our understanding of the new spirit. We had to bide our time, difficult as it might be.

The reader will have recognized that a desire for honesty, sincerity and truth in human relationships, in short, for being *together* in the sense in which God intends it, was at the bottom of my ambition.

Truth always wins in the end, human unwillingness opposes it in vain. In principle truth had already won, and the cage had become obsolete before the First World War started; but, as it so often happens, that victory took some time to become apparent. In the end God turned human resistance into a boon, because the rigid attitude of my entourage only served to increase my longing and love for my people. My love inspired the wish to make it really happy, as far as this lay in my power, and made me ready to adapt myself to its development and its new wishes, to show an open mind and real interest; to move with the times and, while remaining in the background, to do everything to stimulate its growth in freedom.

I want to express my appreciation and warmest gratitude to those members of our entourage who understood us and helped me to attain my goal. I remember them with affectionate respect. Always true to themselves, they informed us of what went on in the cage and outside; they told us all they knew, even when they were aware that something was bound to be disagreeable to us. It was precisely this which gained them my confidence and gratitude and made them real friends. It should not be forgotten that the tendency to flatter those in higher places is part of human nature. In the years after 1914 I discovered, often to my amusement, that the highly placed are always liable to be put in a cage.

I should like to add that as the years went on those around us gradually followed our example. This lightened my task considerably.

Breaking out of the cage meant for me the liberation from influences that could only have been paralysing and destructive of my initiative and courage, indeed of my entire activity.

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In this connection I should remark that in the early days of my reign all the ceremonies and official duties seemed hollow and soulless to me. I blamed this on the cage.

Afterwards I was to learn that my attitude and tone could give a real content to the ceremonies and make them serve the task that I fulfilled in the interest of my people.

4. *The First World War*

THOSE with an inside knowledge of politics had long foreseen that the world was about to be plunged into a war of unprecedented horror. There were many signs of a development that could have no other outcome. The experts only wondered where the spark might originate which would ignite all the inflammable material.

The Balkans had been like a smouldering volcano for years, as was shown by the wars between Turkey on the one hand and Montenegro, Serbia, Bulgaria and Greece on the other, from October 1912 to May 1913, and between Bulgaria and Serbia, Greece, Roumania and Turkey, from June to August 1913.

After these eruptions the air had remained troubled. The idea of Panslavism, under Russia's leadership, was an important influence. The prospect of a war did not deter the Slavonic peoples; they were constantly toying with the idea at that time. In the Balkans many countries had common frontiers, where friction and tensions could easily originate. One of these countries was Austria-Hungary, Germany's ally, who bordered on Slavonic states in the east and south.

The news of the murder of the heir to the Austrian throne Archduke Francis Ferdinand and his wife reached us as we

were about to leave for Groningen to attend the university commemoration festivities. I was deeply disturbed by this tragedy, but even more concerned about its political implications and possible consequences. The matter continued to preoccupy me during the following days.

Austria sent a note to Serbia which was virtually unacceptable to a sovereign state. This note was the reason why the conflict could not end without bloodshed. Russia took Serbia's side, Austria could not draw back without loss of prestige: there was the beginning of a general conflagration.

What would be the attitude of France and Germany, the allies of the two adversaries? The answer to this question was not long in coming. Soon the war had become a European war, with France, Russia and Serbia on one side, Germany and Austria-Hungary on the other. Germany, whose peacetime army was strong enough to allow her to invade a neighbour's territory, promptly attacked Belgium. Belgium—whose neutrality was guaranteed by Germany herself as well as by France and England! Within a few days the German troops were in France.

What was Britain going to do? After a short hesitation she entered the war on the side of France and Russia, and the fire was really ablaze.

For the description of military operations, I refer the reader to the histories of the Great War.

The outbreak of the war came as a complete surprise to our unsuspecting people. In those days even the better-educated were ill informed about political questions outside our frontiers, and they were as much taken aback by the catastrophe as anybody.

I was at Het Loo when the fatal train of events began. My husband was at sea in Norwegian waters. He had just visited Russia, where he was one of the last visitors of the unhappy Czar Nicholas II, and was travelling in Scandinavia.

A telegram from me, requesting his immediate return, reached him in Oslo at the state dinner the King gave in his honour. Within two hours the *Zeeland* was ready to sail. It steamed home at full speed.

It is worth mentioning that my husband arrived at Ymuiden before the Kaiser had returned to Germany from his holiday in the Norwegian fiords. This shows that the events of the last days had surprised him too.

My mother had left for Arolsen shortly before. One Sunday I sent her a letter containing a secret code, which would allow me to ask her to return when necessary without attracting attention, but that same evening I received the news of Germany's declaration of war on Russia. The referendary Jonkheer Van Tets, who was on duty at Het Loo for the Queen's Secretariat, came rushing into my room just before dinner. I can still see him entering the dining-room where the others were waiting for me, with the words: 'All is lost, the war is on,' accompanied by a sweeping gesture. It was an historic dinner. That evening I prepared my departure for The Hague. To avoid causing too much anxiety, however, I travelled by ordinary train at the first opportunity on Monday morning. Juliana followed me later that day.

Immediately on arrival I received Cort van der Linden. With the greatest speed our declaration of neutrality was issued, the mobilization was proclaimed, the commander-in-chief was appointed and given his instructions, and all the necessary social and economic measures were taken. Circumstances demanded rapid action.

During the first few days I received ministers until late in the evening and sometimes even at night. I had arranged with them that they should call on me at any time when something important happened. This allowed me a relative peace.

Juliana and I went to meet my husband at Ymuiden. The arrival of the *Zeeland* was particularly impressive in these circumstances. Mother met no obstacles on her way and also arrived in The Hague very soon.

When the garrison of The Hague was ready to leave for its destination it marched down the Noordeinde on its way to the train. Hendrik, Juliana and I took the salute, surrounded by a large crowd which included many relatives of the soldiers. All faces were marked by anxiety and emotion. No one had been prepared for these events. One generation after another

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had gone to sleep, in the belief that our policy of neutrality afforded sufficient protection. After the long peace our country had enjoyed, the thought that things could change had lost its reality. Now people were suddenly faced with a situation which demanded real sacrifices if our neutrality was to be maintained!

I ended the march past with the cry 'Long live the fatherland' and then started the national anthem. Both were taken up by the crowd with emotion and enthusiasm.

Before entering the palace we turned round to the cheering crowds and took Juliana on our shoulders, so that she could be clearly seen by all as she waved to them.

In those days we often walked past the crowds which had gathered in the Noordeinde and cried a heartfelt 'Long live the fatherland' to them. They always replied by singing 'Wien Neerlands Bloed'.

As soon as the regular soldiers and reservists had joined their units, I went and inspected their usually improvised quarters, in order to satisfy myself that they were properly looked after. I also attended a religious service for the troops.

My husband had a complex task in putting the Netherlands Red Cross on a war footing and preparing its international activities, which had been defined in the Geneva convention and included a postal service for prisoners of war and the transport of wounded prisoners through the Netherlands. As president my husband was often present when the wounded were disembarked and transferred to trains. After such occasions he came back deeply affected by all he had seen and perhaps even more by all the hidden misery.

He attended exercises of Red Cross personnel in all parts of the country as often as possible.

The outbreak of the war acted as a watershed in all lives. A new era had begun with a world-wide struggle for the highest stakes.

The mobilization upset the lives of individuals and families and dislocated society at all its levels. The whole economy was hit by it and many firms even came to a complete stand-

still. Moreover, there was total uncertainty as to what the future would bring. Would a resumption of the same economic activity be possible or was the economy going to be faced with entirely different conditions? The reader should try to imagine the psychological shock that this uncertainty caused.

I recognized its effects in all my meetings with our people, in civilians as well as in those who had been called to arms. I took in all these impressions, through eye and ear and heart. What a variety of reactions to events, what spiritual misery in many lives; and how much suffering was caused by the uncertainty about tomorrow and the day after. No wonder I felt a deep anxiety and that in my heart I awoke to a realization of our people's need of sympathetic, understanding leadership. What was required first of all was good government, the introduction of the right measures, and this was provided with far-seeing judgment by Cort van der Linden's cabinet. But in addition to that a very understandable desire for leadership in a spiritual and psychological sense should also be fulfilled.

The war suddenly imposed upon me the obligation to try and provide such leadership, or rather to let it proceed from me. I was fully aware that this could only be done once a new confidence in me had been created. A war makes special demands in this respect; the confidence that was sufficient in peace-time is no longer enough. Confidence was the word that echoed in me constantly; my thinking and acting were long dominated by the thought that I had to earn it. From morning till night this idea never left me.

At such moments one becomes conscious of the smallness of one's powers and one realizes acutely one's dependence on God's help. But at the same time it becomes apparent that He who has given us our task can and will give us all we need to perform it. This is what happened. God helped our people and its government. God also helped me, and thanks to Him the indispensable confidence between our people and me was established.

The reader should try to imagine the disruption of family life, the problems of education when the father's presence was

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no longer felt, and the influence of the disturbing events on youth in general. Divorces became more and more frequent. It is no exaggeration to say that all marriages which were not very soundly based broke up. Did all this not point to inner struggles and uncertainty? This also worried me. I asked myself how all these drifting people could be helped. How could they find the strength of faith they needed to carry the burdens of mobilization? Or if they had no faith, how could they find the way to God? Did their spiritual condition not make them impervious to the great truths of the Bible, which were the only ones that could help them? Would a superficial reading of the Bible not give them the impression that what was written there had no relevance to their situation and make them turn down the help offered? It should be remembered that I am speaking of a time when many people were under the spell of rationalism.

My impression is that since those days a deeper spiritual awareness has grown, producing a more receptive attitude to the Bible. At the time people were content with the surface, many were only interested in adapting the biblical stories to the spirit of the times, thus robbing them of their essence, and never got beyond ethical considerations.

Admittedly there were many favourable exceptions, there were people who approached the biblical truths as the Bible itself demands, but the times were dominated by the opposite attitude of mind.

Although as I have remarked I had a personal faith which was not shaken by the war, at the same time I could not entirely escape the influence of that mentality. Something of it was present in me too; if this had not been the case, if I had managed to remain untouched by the ideas that surrounded me, I would have worried less. In retrospect I see perfectly that my anxiety for these people was out of place, that I should have left the whole matter in God's hands with faith and trust. I learned that only later.

My confidence in the reality of the biblical stories returned completely when Juliana had reached the age to understand them. I remember reading the New Testament with her, aided by a description of Palestine which had appeared shortly

before. The author, who had spent many years in the country, gave a picture of the life and the people in Christ's days. His comments brought the stories of the gospels fully to life for us; they made us see Christ's life on earth as an immediate reality. The parable of the sower suddenly took on a different aspect for me when I read the description of a Palestinian field as it really was and of the soil to which Christ referred, at which He may even have pointed a finger.

Germany's mobilization took place during the invasion of Belgium and the advance towards France. On Mother's birthday, the 2nd of August, we received the news of the occupation of Luxemburg and the siege of Liège.

Belgium fell into German hands without much resistance, except for a part of Flanders where the Yser line held firm until the end of the war with the help of the Allies.

For the benefit of younger readers I should add that in 1839, when Belgium's peace treaty with the Netherlands was concluded, Belgium also received a treaty of guarantee from Britain, France and Germany, who pledged themselves to respect her neutrality. In invading Belgian territory Germany therefore violated the treaty she had signed. On the other hand France and Britain met their obligation by opposing this illegal act. Belgium was compelled to abandon her neutrality and to join the Allies.

The defence of Liège and resistance elsewhere on Belgian territory soon came to an end. When the Germans approached Antwerp, a mass exodus of Belgians towards our frontier began. They met with much compassion and generosity in our people and many of them were spontaneously received into families. The refugees however were not only civilians. There were also a large number of soldiers, and our neutrality obliged us to disarm and intern them. The government set up internment camps without delay.

Soon it became apparent that private hospitality could not cope with the stream of refugees, so the state and many municipalities were faced with the task of finding food and housing for them.

Towards the end of the war the retreating German armies

drove the people of northern France from their homes. They also came to us, rather than run the risk of being caught between the German and Allied armies. It will be understood that it was not easy to find food for so many guests. The country was already suffering severe shortages, due to the British blockade of the continent and the German submarine campaign.

Although our farmers did all they could, the blockade became so severe that the shortages of food and other necessities were pressing by 1917, a foretaste as it were of what the nation was to suffer during the Second World War. Protest as we might against the injustice that the blockade meant to a neutral country, our appeals had little effect when they were not passed over in silence.

Soon after the first Belgians had entered our country we heard stories of the German troops' callous and cruel conduct. We were deeply shocked by this, as were people all over the world.

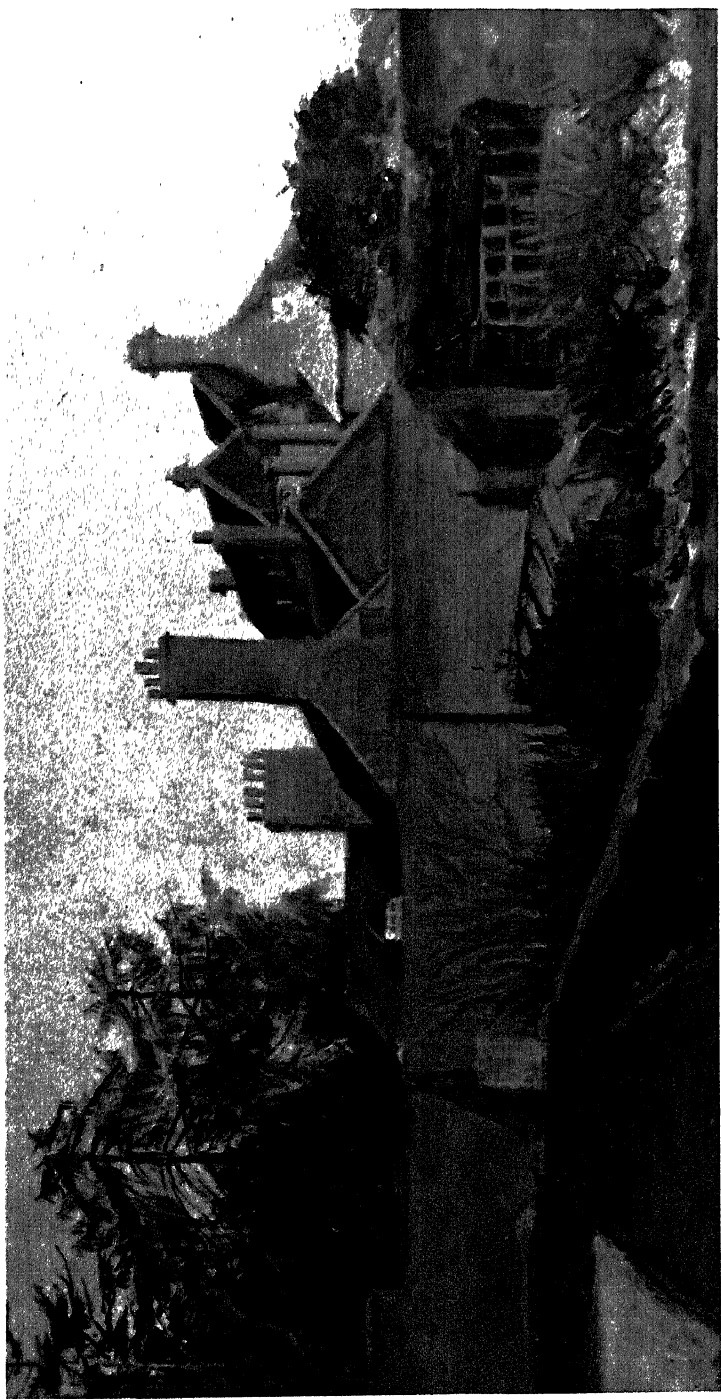
Our proclamation of neutrality confirmed the policy we had followed for a long succession of years. One should try to imagine how difficult it is to maintain this attitude for more than four years!

The neutrality implied well-defined obligations for every Dutchman, but in cases where civilians were involved the practical application of the rules usually had to be left to their personal judgment.

It was however required of every civil servant, and every member of the armed forces in a responsible position, that he should know the rights of the neutrals as laid down in international law and should act in accordance with our proclamation of neutrality.

Neutrality in the sense in which it is used in international law does not simply mean that one stands aloof. It is a defined legal status which the neutral country has adopted, and the parties at war are obliged to respect its rights.

The duties of neutrality are absolute and leave no room for human feelings. This situation can easily lead to tensions and struggles in the individual. At heart man is never neutral,



Stubbings House *Oil painting by the author*



Rijksvoorlichtingsdienst, The Hague

Princess Juliana with her children, Canada 1944

he always has a preference, sometimes without knowing it; and in a world-wide conflict, more than ever, his feelings are constantly involved and his preference is reinforced.

The authorities had to be on their guard all the time against any infringement of our neutrality by the belligerents, who usually pleaded necessity of war to justify their actions. In spite of all our protests—and we made them fearlessly—the limits to our freedom of action became narrower all the time. In the end our shipping and food supplies had been brought to practically a standstill, and if the situation had continued much longer famine would have resulted.

Another thing was that we always had to consider whether the measures that hit us might not announce a desire on the part of one of the belligerents to draw us into the war. In other words, we had to keep pace with the belligerents and preferably be a step in advance.

Cort van der Linden came to see me nearly every morning at ten o'clock to discuss these problems. Hardly a day passed without something happening prejudicial to our interests, which demanded immediate reaction. I took care to be always fully informed when he arrived. The news had usually come in a few hours earlier. My knowledge of international law was subjected to a severe test!

My daily task under these conditions was far from inspiring. I found it sordid and depressing, to give all one's attention to illegal acts which might have been committed against us and to the question of our defence against them. And this went on for more than four years.

What a contrast to the desire for inner elevation, which became stronger than ever in those difficult times.

The protection of our neutrality made high demands on our soldiers. Having to stand with arms at the order all the time tests the morale of an army. Our men were admirable. It was largely due to their morale and readiness that we were spared the horrors of war.

For myself and the authorities the outbreak of the war entailed complete isolation. On top of the silence and general discretion that my office inevitably demands, all our doings

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now had to be shrouded in secrecy. A special difficulty for me was that my movements might give rise to speculations concerning the state of the war and our policy of neutrality. On the whole my activity had to remain hidden from the public eye, although there were times when a special effort was made to draw attention to it. I could give the following example of such an occasion: sometimes rumours went round that there was an immediate danger of our being drawn into the war. Once when that happened a morning walk from the Noordeinde to my mother's palace in the Voorhout proved sufficient to calm the anxieties. The public concluded from it that I had nothing in particular to do and that the rumours were obviously unfounded.

As a compensation for my obligatory solitude the tie between my people and myself grew stronger all the time. This was a ray of light in the darkness.

I shall now return to my private life. When I had arrived in The Hague I set to work to reduce the household to a level suitable to the times. Somewhat to my surprise, my measures provoked a short-lived but violent resistance among some members of my entourage.

Those of my A.D.C.s and orderlies who were fit for active service joined their units and I retained only those who in the first instance were not affected by the mobilization. They were joined by a few others who were not members of the military reserves and who offered their services to me. There was much less work than before for the civilians of my entourage, now that many ceremonial functions were cancelled. My everyday entourage came to consist of my ladies and the remaining officers. All this meant the demolition of the cage—the consummation of a process which was already completed under the surface; its final stage. My entourage had changed completely, and had been adapted to the demands of the moment.

During the first days I never left my home in The Hague, so as to be available at all times. All I allowed myself by way of recreation were a few moments under the old chestnut tree in the garden. It faced the house, so that I could never miss

anybody who came to see me. After the first week I went out a couple of times on visits to the troops in The Hague and Scheveningen.

My first duty was to be ready at all times. Everything was governed by it. This thought occupied me constantly, and often worried me unnecessarily. I had to keep up this state of readiness till the end of the war, for on no account could I afford to be surprised by a major crisis at a moment when I was not in a state to take important decisions.

I was ill only once during all that time. Fortunately this came at a 'quiet' moment, when there was a deadlock at the front and neither side could advance. I returned home with the mumps and influenza from a visit to the flooded areas in the province of North-Holland. It was the winter of 1916. I tried to console myself with the thought that I had incurred my indisposition in the exercise of my duties, and fortunately my condition was not so weak that it prevented me from thinking and making decisions.

I did however vanish from the scene for a considerable time because of the risk of infection.

My love for the fatherland was like a consuming fire, and not only *in* me; it expressed itself in fierceness *around* me. It was only restricted by reflection and reason when the highest interests of people and country demanded it. Anyone who threatened to damage these interests was my personal enemy. My thinking and my whole life was dominated by vigilance on their behalf.

After a few weeks, when my uninterrupted presence at the Noordeinde was no longer considered necessary, we went to live at the Huis ten Bosch. We returned to The Hague for the winter.

Mother, who had taken up her residence at the Voorhout, spent the whole of the war in town so as to be immediately informed of the news and have daily contacts with us. She shared fully in my anxiety for the nation. She also had private worries concerning her relatives. One of her sisters lived in England, the widow of the Duke of Albany. Mother's thoughts

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often went out to her. Her other relatives lived in Germany. From a distance she continued to give them her warm and loving sympathy.

At the Huis ten Bosch I could hear the rumbling of the artillery in the distance, not the reports themselves but the vibrations they caused. Sound waves follow a curve, so there is a large area where nothing can be heard and then the sound is audible again at the point where the curve touches the earth.

I remember that the great explosion at Antwerp, which occurred when Father was still alive, could be heard clearly at Het Loo.

On a short holiday at Het Loo during the war we could hear the front in Flanders. Afterwards in our house near the North Sea coast we could hear the same sounds in the dips but not on top of the dunes. My A.D.C.s taught me to distinguish between drumfire and ordinary fire.

In the long run it gave me a certain peace to recognize these same sounds coming from the battle-fields. At least, I told myself, our country has not been invaded; and I began to worry when I heard unusual and heavier noises.

We spent the winters of 1915 and 1916 at the Noordeinde, the rest of the year at the Huis ten Bosch. It was not until the summer of 1916 that I could afford to take a holiday a little further from The Hague. I took Juliana to Katwijk, which was still quite near, so that I could go to town as often as necessary, on horseback or by car along the beach. The sea air did us both so much good that after our return to the Huis ten Bosch I discussed with my husband the possibility of building a small house of our own in the dunes. It seemed to me that the air would help to keep me fit for my task. Our decision was soon made, and after we had obtained the permission of the Water Board, who owned the land, the building of a semi-permanent house was undertaken early in 1917. We moved into it in the first days of July and from then on lived there from April till about December.

My rides on horseback from Katwijk sometimes took me as far as the dunes north of the seaside resort of Noordwijk, to the 'Horses' Cemetery' and the 'Wuthering Corner'. This

latter part which was still real dune country, with a vegetation of tall ferns, provided me with the name for our new house. A little devil in me decided the issue with the argument that a foreigner would find the name difficult to pronounce and to spell: *de ruigen hoek*, such a very Dutch name!

A description of my visits to different units of the army and the navy could fill many pages, but I shall be brief. The inspections taxed my moral and physical strength, but they kept me in permanent contact with our armed forces and gave me an impression of their life.

My visits were arranged at regular intervals, those lasting several days every two and a half to three months. They were organized in such a way that when possible I should visit every unit. Their first purpose was to reinforce the morale of our men, which fortunately was not lacking, and to set an example of endurance and tenacity; at the same time they were designed to acquaint me with all the aspects of the soldier's life, both on and off duty.

Until shortly before the armistice I had only heard the rumbling of the artillery in the far distance. My last inspection took me to our troops on the Belgian frontier in the province of Zeeland; on arrival in Oostburg I heard it directly for the first time. On my tour along the frontier I passed Belgian guns which were firing at distant enemy targets from close to our territory.

I also walked through the frontier-town of Aardenburg on my way to visit a civilian who had been hit by shrapnel. On the whole the Allies strictly abstained from acts of war on our territory.

I add a programme of one of my tours to give a better idea of this part of my task.

*Visit to the 3rd Division in North-Brabant
November 23rd and 24th, 1916*

23rd NOVEMBER

Klooster barracks, Breda; 14.00-16.00 hours: Visit to courses in Dutch language, arithmetic, engineering, wound-dressing, shorthand and typing.

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16.15: Cavalry barracks; Courses in home industry, horse mastership, Dutch language and fencing.

20.00: From Breda by car to Terheyden, Zevenbergen and Oudenbosch, visits to courses in home industry, Dutch language (including first lessons for illiterates!), Morse code, first aid; 23.20: H.M. attended a night march and a night exercise of an infantry brigade, a field artillery unit and a hussar unit, near Etten-Princenhage. Afterwards H.M. left for her state carriage at Etten.

24th NOVEMBER

By car to Quatre Bras, where H.M. mounted on horseback and from 10.10 hours attended an exercise in closed order of an infantry brigade and visited an outpost line of an infantry battalion, a field security service and the advance guard of an infantry battalion.

H.M. dismounted near Klappenberg and returned by car to the state carriage at Etten.

13.45: Departure by car for Rozendaal, for visits to a few courses, 14.00 to 14.30. Then by car to Bergen op Zoom, for visits to courses and military homes, 15.00 to 16.00 hours.

In the midst of all the tension and misery caused by the war, our fatherland was ravaged by extensive floods early in 1916. Heavy storms sent the water beating against the dikes of the Zuyderzee, which collapsed or overflowed all along its western shores. The Isle of Marken was also inundated. The population spent anxious days and nights in attics and on roof-tops. Whole houses were destroyed by the waves in a matter of seconds. The distressed areas could only be reached by boat, the roads had disappeared.

Some of the dikes had been neglected, others were not high enough. The inundations occurred at points where no inner dikes stopped the water.

The province of North-Holland was flooded over a larger area than anyone could have foreseen; at some points the water stretched as far as the dunes of the North Sea coast. The low-lying parts of the province of Utrecht also suffered. Further damage was done by recurrent storms in the course of the winter.

Our soldiers rendered invaluable services in the rescue of men and cattle, and also contributed to the relief work with

military rations. At the same time they assisted the diikers in the building of emergency dikes and the reinforcing of existing ones. Vessels of all kinds were brought into service to save as much as possible of North-Holland's livestock.

The town of Monnikendam was spared at first and its large church was used as emergency quarters for horses and cattle. The people of the towns round the flooded areas offered generous hospitality to those who had been driven from their homes. The dike-bursts were too extensive and far too dangerously placed for them to be repaired in winter. All that could be done was to build temporary dams. The anxiety continued all through the winter and the situation remained precarious in stormy weather.

My husband and I visited the distressed areas at once. We divided the field between us, so that the whole of the area would receive a visit soon. We could not leave out a single town or district, because the population would have felt that their case was not considered serious. It is a human characteristic that, when a disaster occurs, everyone likes to look upon his own community as one of the worst hit.

I travelled across the fields by boat. For a few days Amsterdam served as my headquarters, because it was conveniently near the flooded areas and because it gave much help to the refugees, through an improvised voluntary organization.

My husband first went to Marken, Hoogland, Spakenburg and Bunschoten and organized Red Cross work there. Then we exchanged areas and I went to Marken and the other places just named. Soldiers from the island rowed me across it and told me all the facts with youthful fire.

In Spakenburg and Marken children had been born during the first terrible night, while the waves roared through the house. Their mothers spent the night lying on collar-beams. I offered to stand godmother to the babies, Aartje Wilhelmina Vedder of Spakenburg and Lijsje Wilhelmina Van Riel of Marken. In suggesting this I followed the example of my grandfather. Years before I had read in his biography by Bosscha that he had made the same offer to a mother whose child was born during a dike-burst. I am very fond of my goddaughters and still keep in touch with them.

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I also went to Anna Paulowna, another severely hit locality. It took a long time to visit all the victims in their new quarters.

The village of Ilpendam lost its peat-soil on which the duck-breeders depended for their living. It was the end of a local industry. The ducks were removed to another part of the country. I found the Ilpendammers in Amsterdam.

The second inundation was even worse than the first; the water penetrated still further and the situation became desperate. Anxious nights followed, for the only protection was that afforded by coffer dams filled with sandbags.

The town of Purmerend was spared, and it was possible to strengthen its dike; but Monnikendam, known at the time as 'the fortress in the waves', was flooded.

I went to Amsterdam for the second time and took Juliana to see the effects of the first dike-burst near Monnikendam, expecting to find the town still safe. Happily Juliana was too young to understand how critical and miserable the situation was. I shall always remember how I looked out for the dam of sandbags when we approached in our boat; I had seen it before, rising up out of the water, but this time there was nothing but water, water everywhere. I was deeply upset when I realized what had happened and the image rose before my mind of the terrible night the local population had passed. I had promised to go and visit the victims when I had seen the old gap in the dike, so we went there first. On our return to Monnikendam I left Juliana in the boat to spare her the sight of so much misery and I visited the inhabitants, who had spent a fearful and sleepless night under the tolling of the alarm bell. When we arrived back in Amsterdam I sent Juliana home and the next day went to Zaandam, in an open launch across the countryside. I visited those who had fallen ill after their terrifying experiences and distributed children's clothing to the mothers who had lost everything. I was assisted by Mr Ter Laan, the burgomaster of Zaandam. As we continued on our way through the district, he took me on a visit to a family living in a house that might collapse at any moment. It stood entirely unprotected in the midst of the storms and the waves. A shaky little plank-bridge provided the only connection with the outside world. We crossed it and were received by the

occupant who led the way to an attic room, the only one still available to the family.

I then went on to Alkmaar. I was to set out on the next stage of my tour the following morning, after having spent the night in the train; but then the mumps interfered, accompanied by a high temperature, and I had to be taken home.

I was profoundly impressed by all the suffering. At night I still heard the rhythm of the waves entering by doors and windows and retreating a moment later and the flapping of doors opening and closing. I had seen many thousands of houses in that state. The furniture and all kinds of possessions floated in what used to be the streets. Remembering all these things, one began to blame oneself for having a good bed in a solid house.

Over the infinity of night and water, over all the suffering that was hidden in this darkness, I saw a soft and kindly Light in my mind's eye. It signified to me that there is One who never forgets His children.

I have reached the last act of the First World War. The opposing forces being of equal strength, the front had long remained static and attempts at breaking through had been foiled on both sides. There seemed no prospect of an early decision.

In 1917, however, the United States of America entered the war on the side of the Allies, and began to send troops and supplies. A number of their divisions soon appeared at the front, completely fresh and excellently equipped. When they had acquired a little experience of battle they were at the height of their powers, and it was due to them that the fortunes of war turned in favour of the Allies. Very gradually the army bulletins began to show a new development. At first the news concerned only slight variations and bulges in the front. The remarkable thing about these was that they never occurred at the expense of the Allies. Were we really approaching the decisive moment, and was the end of the war in sight? It seemed almost too good to be true.

After a time the German lines began to crumble and there followed the retreat of the German army through France and

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Belgium. But at the same time there were other events, news of which was very difficult to obtain. In Germany itself something was happening, kept secret as long as possible. We have never found out exactly what it was.

Suddenly we were surprised by the news of a crisis in Berlin; the Kaiser had left his headquarters in Spa and had gone to the capital of the Reich. Circumstances made a quick solution of the crisis imperative—the German troops were on the retreat. Only several days later however we heard that Prince Maximilian von Baden had been appointed chancellor. At this critical juncture his conduct appeared somewhat hesitant and uncertain. He could hardly inspire confidence in the German people. Would *this* government be able to control the situation, or were strange things about to happen?

The news that the Kaiser had returned to his headquarters after the appointment of Prince Maximilian caused surprise; under the circumstances one would have thought that his presence in Berlin was essential. His return could point to only one thing: the situation, both in the country and in the army, was so grave that all hope had been abandoned. It was the act of the '*oberster Kriegsherr*' who went out to meet death with his men; but for the moment we had too little information to draw any firm conclusions.

I shall never forget the November morning at the Ruygenhoek when I was called very early with the news that the Kaiser had crossed our frontier in the province of Limburg. This communication from the government was soon followed by a telegram from the Kaiser himself, who tried to explain his action to me. I was utterly astonished; it was the very last thing I should have thought possible. As we had received news that since his return to Spa some of the Rhine bridges were held by troops that were no longer loyal to the government, I tended at first to seek an explanation in the Kaiser's desire to prevent needless bloodshed, which would have been inevitable if he had crossed the river. In other words, I thought he had made a sacrifice. Very soon, however, I heard a different version, which was confirmed by all the further details we received. To put it briefly, it became

apparent that he had yielded to his advisers who were only concerned for his life. His habit of listening to the counsels of these advisers who had neither the statesmanship nor the courage which the situation demanded, had been his undoing.

It is no exaggeration to say that a week and perhaps even longer passed before I became convinced of the truth of these stories; they seemed too improbable. I shall not go further into Wilhelm II's case. After all nobody knows exactly what he felt and what the circumstances were in which he found himself.

The Netherlands government assigned him a place of residence and demanded a promise that he would not leave it and would abstain from political activity. His abdication followed soon after.

The Empress was invited on my initiative to come and join her husband. I decided this not only out of hospitality but also through my knowledge of their relationship and characters. I expected a good influence from her presence, not only on her husband and his advisers but on the whole political aspect of this exceptional situation.

A few days after his father the Crown Prince crossed our frontier and was interned as a combatant, first at Hillenraadt and subsequently on the Isle of Wieringen.

These events caused a sensation in the world. Public opinion and the Allied governments applied pressure to obtain the extradition of both the Kaiser and his son. We refused this, by virtue of our right of asylum where the Kaiser was concerned, and because of our duty of internment towards the Crown Prince.

The flight and abdication of the Kaiser were followed by the abdication of the other German princes. Everything happened with incredible rapidity. Revolutionary elements and excited crowds demanded the abdication of their princes. The weaker ones gave in at once and left their lands precipitately; some others complied with greater dignity. Of course they carried all the members of their families with them in their fall; none of them would be allowed to hold any public office. Even those who had devoted the whole of

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their lives to the service of their peoples and who were held in the highest esteem were committed to the bitter fate of the outcast.

In the meantime the Allied victory had been gained and a cease-fire agreed upon. The armistice was then signed and subsequently the peace was dictated to Germany.

Having supported all the consequences of the war with calm resignation, our people now had to cope with the excitement provoked by the revolution just across the border. The atmosphere was electric also as a result of the prospect of demobilization and a return to peace-time conditions. Not surprisingly, the transition was accompanied by some signs of strain.

From Germany the spark of revolution jumped over to this country and caused commotion in some groups of the population. We had a few tense days. In view of the situation I returned to The Hague from the Ruygenhoek.

It proved a mistake, however, to think that the nation as a whole or a large part of it was ready to start a revolution.

We were invited to the Malieveld in The Hague, where an immense demonstration of loyalty to the government took place. After unharnessing the horses, the demonstrators pulled the carriage with Hendrik, Juliana and me in it across the parade ground and through the town back to the Noordeinde.

Immediately afterwards we received an invitation from Amsterdam for a demonstration of loyalty. In the meantime civilians and members of the armed forces from all parts of the country announced their willingness to give active support to the government.

Shortly before the armistice Cort van der Linden's government had resigned, to be succeeded by a cabinet under Ruys de Beerenbrouck, which had the task of maintaining law and order. It issued an appeal for volunteers. Citizen Militias and a Special Volunteer Reserve were formed.

Like the Congress of Vienna, Versailles revised the map of Europe. I shall not discuss the new boundaries; I only want to

say something about an unsuccessful attempt to modify a frontier.

In the countries which had taken part in the war many favoured a system of territorial compensations. In some eyes, the southern parts of the provinces of Zealand and Limburg would make a perfect compensation for Belgium. Of course this suggestion was very ill received by the populations themselves, who were good Dutchmen and wanted to remain so, and elsewhere in the country feelings were no less strong. Popular petitions expressing forceful protest were signed in the districts affected. I received these petitions at the Huis ten Bosch in the early spring of 1919. It was a moving occasion, owing to the matter itself as well as to the feelings of those who presented the petitions. One should visualize this event in the historic setting of the Huis ten Bosch.

After the presentation we all sang the two provincial anthems, followed by the national anthem.

Juliana was an attentive spectator at this ceremony, which gave rise to such stormy enthusiasm.

In the end the expressed preference of the population decided the negotiators in Paris: Zealand Flanders and Limburg remained Dutch.

During the war Juliana was still a happy and carefree child; she was only nine when it ended. She realized that everything was different from before, for herself and for us, but she was fortunately unable to understand the reasons behind it.

At the Huis ten Bosch she had attractive rooms with a balcony facing south. She often played in the sand-pit, and caught frogs with her fishing-net, in the clear water of the round pond behind the house. There was also a mud-boat which was often unused for long periods, and we sometimes went out punting in it. Finally there was the rowing-boat. It was a great treat for Juliana when we took her for a row to the Horsten. On such occasions the fishing-net rendered invaluable services in the gathering of duckweed and water plants, with all the animals that live in them.

I should not forget to mention her dogs and the sweet

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little fawn which had been caught at Het Loo and sent to The Hague, where it was brought up on the bottle.

When Juliana was six years old we formed a small class at the Huis ten Bosch. We had sought the advice of Jan Ligthart, the well-known educational expert, and had decided to adopt his method. I have a vivid recollection of my visit to his school. I walked all the way, without being recognized by the public. Ligthart let everything follow its normal course, apart from taking over for a moment in a few classes to demonstrate his method. Afterwards he came to visit Juliana and me and watched her playing in order to form an opinion of her character before he advised us on her education. It was one of his last outings; he died soon after.

The first teacher of his school came to conduct the class. The children owe a great deal to her teaching. Her mature judgment and her clear insight into character gave her great authority with them. Everything was done according to Ligthart's method, including the laying-out of little gardens at the Huis ten Bosch.

Horses played an important part in our lives during the war; I used to carry out my army inspections on horseback. Immediately after the outbreak of the war the frontiers of several countries were closed to the export of horses, but later on the traders sometimes managed to get hold of a few, so that I was never without them until the last period of the war, when a shortage of oats was the difficulty.

I could discuss this subject *ad infinitum*: amusing moments on my inspections, my own adventures on horseback and those of my companions. For every newly acquired horse a name had to be found. Juliana loved doing that, with the assistance of her children's books.

Once, when she was reading a story of a crow called Black Jacob, I bought a black horse, and of course it immediately received that name. No one could have doubted that Black Jacob came from the battle-fields; his whole appearance showed it. We had never had a horse like him in our stables. His mane had been cut off as well as his tail, which was only skin and bone. When he was brought round he hung his

head low between his forelegs from fatigue. He had to be carefully nursed. At first I could only use him for short rides. He was perfectly quiet in a crowd and at military ceremonies; waving handkerchiefs and parasols on his nose never worried him, only gunfire was more than he could bear; neither I nor anybody else could stop him bolting when he heard it.

An Irish bay I had later was called Zedda by Juliana. On this horse she received her first riding lessons. Zedda had a will of her own and had to be handled with tact, but she was always quiet and gentle with children. She had a decided preference for them, and showed it on many occasions.

Juliana was fond of rides in the country. She loved it best when we stopped on the way, for then she could show us the tricks she invented herself. She asked for two other horses to be put side to side with Zedda and then she climbed across their backs, shouting for joy all the while. She was so cheerful and her little voice was so noisy that she sometimes set the whole cavalcade moving and we really had to teach her to be a little quieter with the horses.

Two conversations I had shortly after the armistice made a particular impression on me. Both were private talks with acquaintances of long standing who had reached the evening of their lives. They told me that the events of the war had disillusioned them about humanity. They said that their whole lives had been lived in the conviction that mankind was destined to make steady progress. I was moved by their disenchantment, by their discovery that they had lived under an illusion, and I felt sincere pity for these excellent people who had to face such a grave disappointment at their advanced age; but I felt surprise as well as pity. I told them that I had long been aware that man can sink to very low depths when he tries to steer his course without God's help.

At this point I should like to explain how I see my life of those four years now that I can judge from a longer experience. The basic difference is that at the time I was still in the middle of a process of spiritual growth and had not yet attained maturity. I had many things to learn in the

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new situation. My reactions would have been different if I had been older when the First World War started; similar acts would have appeared milder, less violent to others. Patriotism, self-sacrifice, devotion—all these had to be purified. I thought that as long as my patriotism and readiness were unlimited nothing was left to be desired. I had not learned to relate them to the larger world of my spiritual possessions, to assign them their place in it and make them function from there. They could have meant more to others and could have been more elevating. I had not yet realized that a quality which is not rooted in the soil of a spiritual world will necessarily remain a wild shoot.

The great loneliness of those days was *my opportunity with God*. Whenever I could allow myself to give a few moments of reflection to a subject that was not our neutrality and to escape from the low spiritual level of constant occupation with the plans of the belligerents and the problems of our defence, my thoughts soared to the plane where 'the good war' is waged.

There were many problems I had to solve, and many of them the same as those that faced everybody else at the time. Owing to the transformation of nearly all lives, our problems presented themselves in a different light; and some of them were really new.

My best opportunity to think about my problems came in the course of my army inspections, during periods of rest in the train, where I seldom received messages from the government or from others. At night the quiet and freedom from interference were perfect. I used to read Wilfrid Monod's book *Il a souffert*, a work written for Holy Week and addressed to his parishioners.

It was written long ago and it bears the mark of its time, but the contents are still alive for us. Re-reading it after the Second World War I felt renewed admiration for the author's profundity and his perfect feeling for human problems and human suffering.

What could have been better suited to lift one up to a higher plane, where the atmosphere was untainted by daily

events, than the contemplation of suffering seen in the Light of the Highest Suffering; and to feel the joy of Him who assumed it, '*la joie rédemptrice*'?

It was a healing activity to apply this to all the suffering of those days, and also to myself.

In spite of all the worries the war caused us my personal problems were gradually solved; as a rule I did not even notice it, or rather I suddenly noticed that they were no longer *problems*! Thus the end of the First World War was also the end of a period in my life.

5. *Between the Wars*

ALTHOUGH it is not my intention to describe the world situation after the First World War, I shall sketch in a few lines a background for the events that will now be discussed.

Firstly. It should be remembered that the nations of Europe had called on those of other continents to help them to decide a conflict which was mainly a European concern. It is, however, not easy for us Europeans to understand the moral effect that this assistance and the conflict itself had on the non-European nations.

How proud Europe was of its predominance in civilization and technical development, of its leading role in many fields. Europe enjoyed a higher reputation than it deserved.

The war had caused considerable disillusionment in other continents. Europe had fallen from its pedestal, and it was felt that the time had come to end its hegemony over other nations. The desire to apply the Monroe doctrine generally and to establish self-determination everywhere grew stronger, and the emancipation from Europe was on the way.

Secondly. The Allies had defeated German militarism, dictated severe conditions of peace, imposed high reparation

payments and generally done their best to teach the enemy a harsh lesson.

The disappointment of the German people at the defeat was so strong that the revolution broke out, a constitution on the model of those of western Europe was drawn up and a socialist government came to power. These events had some effect on other nations, although there were no further revolutions.

The victory had been a costly one for the Allies. Apart from a heavy loss of lives—which had occurred on both sides—they had been forced to spend immense amounts of money and to transform their industries and their social structure, an effort that had taxed them to the limits of their strength.

I refer the reader to my attempt to show how heavy even the burdens were that we as neutrals had to bear: how much heavier those of the nations at war must have been!

It took Europe a long time to recover from the economic blow it had received. An initial recovery was soon followed by a long crisis and heavy unemployment. Because the crisis affected the whole world it was extremely difficult to solve; also there was a lack of agreement in ideas and interests. Many conferences were held, some of them at the League of Nations founded in Geneva, but they made little difference.

Meanwhile new developments in Germany had soon begun to attract the attention of other countries.

The Russian revolution, which had led to the murder of the Czar's whole family by the bolsheviks, had found a fertile soil in defeated Germany, where the supporters of bolshevism had joined with other discontented groups and had lent a particularly sharp edge to the revolution. This had perturbed many Germans; they feared an effective increase in the powers of the supporters of a foreign regime, and looked for protection. Together with the misery of war and defeat, this makes it understandable that the influence of nazism and fascism grew rapidly. The German had been used for centuries to submission to a strong authority. Now that this had been removed he readily embraced the national-socialist doctrine; and before long it had found practical application.

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Hitler and his followers had for several years been working from Munich. After the failure of a *coup d'état* he sought power by constitutional means, and in 1933 he succeeded.

I shall resist the temptation to describe the development of his regime; enough has been written about it. The course of events as everyone knows it furnishes the best illustration of the principles and practice of the system.

I only want to remind you of the development in Italy, which brought Mussolini to power even before Hitler. The alliance of these two dictators for long exercised a considerable influence on the fate of Europe.

Gradually communism and fascism also established footholds in this country, but their followers were relatively limited in number. Of course world events, particularly those on the other side of our frontier, could not fail to influence some groups of the population. Reflection, calm judgment and aversion from excesses inspired a demand for a strong exercise of authority on a democratic basis; this was the principle of our policy until the Second World War. At the same time earnest attempts were made to overcome the economic crisis, as far as it was in our power; but as the nations of Europe could not agree on a form of co-operation, we were doomed to move in a vicious circle all the time.

Our political problems during the war had been entirely different from the ones we had known in peace-time; and when peace had returned most of the problems that faced us were once again unfamiliar, as a result of the changed situation of Europe and of our country. We could no longer remain aloof, although many people would still have preferred it. Henceforth we occupied the place indicated by our geographic situation and our achievements, in every respect, politically, economically and culturally. It is no wonder that our national existence was deeply affected by the consequences.

In addition to this there was our membership of the League of Nations, which had been founded in 1920. It created the need of a foreign policy; a new era had begun.

My interest and activity had already moved in this direction

between 1914 and 1918. That had been my preparation. Now I had the opportunity to test my ideas. Many problems of limited importance, to which I would have devoted much of my time and attention in the old days, henceforth received only summary attention. The new situation wrought a profound change in my conception of my constitutional duties.

The problems with which the Netherlands were confronted, or in which they were involved, were usually long-term problems. They could not have been settled within the short life-span of one cabinet. This made it necessary for me to acquire a thorough knowledge of them, as it was my task to pass them on and to see that they received continued attention. This was now permanently part of my work, and of course it was accentuated during the Second World War. I gave my full attention and all my thinking-power and energy to these problems, and contributed to their solution to the extent that the constitution permitted.

There were few people who had a real grasp of the major problems of the time. The last seventy-five years have seen few true statesmen.

The food shortage continued for a considerable time after the end of hostilities. Improvement came only gradually. At first it was hampered by the difficulties of the transition from mobilization to peace-time conditions. The change-over was not effected smoothly. I took a personal interest in the conditions under which our people lived, and gave special attention to measures designed to deal with the housing shortage.

After a difficult period life returned to normal, but not for long. Soon the big economic crisis loomed, and the period of the harrowing problem of unemployment began.

When peace had returned, I was strongly aware of my responsibility to adapt my public activities, my household and my entourage to the spirit of the times. There should be no more ostentation. My conduct should always correspond with people's profound feelings about life. Every programme for me had to be designed with that end in view. There should

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be contact with all classes of the population in their working, striving, thinking and feeling. Any ceremonial which could form an obstacle should be abolished. The difficult circumstances in which the nation found itself made it quite natural that I should limit receptions at the palace to the minimum.

The spirit of the new times demanded a change of attitude towards our staff, who had rights as well as duties, the same that were recognized everywhere else in society. I appointed a special counsellor for these questions and I set up a board of appeal to deal with any disputes that occurred.

Although the number of my official duties had been considerably reduced, there was still a great deal of work for me. My constitutional task continued to demand much of my time and energy, and at the same time I devoted myself cheerfully and even with enthusiasm to the application of the new spirit that I have described.

But there were other tasks too. In the first place there was my maternal duty towards Juliana, her upbringing and her education to be looked after. Then I had to assist my husband whenever he needed my help. Finally there was the court itself, with all its household matters, and there were my finances. I had to attend to these matters myself, if I wanted to fulfil my official task properly.

Juliana's education absorbed much of my attention. Her class had come to the end of the primary schools' curriculum when the children were ten years old and was then dissolved. This coincided roughly with the time when we resumed the tradition of spending the summer and autumn at Het Loo, with an interruption when we went to The Hague for the opening of the States-General.

From then on our child was to have private tuition. We decided that she would have to finish her secondary education in less than the usual time, for the constitution laid down that on completion of her eighteenth year she would act as Regent if I should be unable to perform my duties and, if I should die, would be my successor. This meant that at that age she should have completed her studies, including those

on the academic level, and have acquired all the knowledge necessary for a ruling position. We invited the teacher of the class, Mrs Van der Reyden, to continue as a tutor in some subjects, partly because it would make the transition to a new type of education less sudden. We appointed Miss Oosterlee to the post of governess; she also taught French. Nor were the classical languages forgotten, although Juliana could not give as much time to them as the pupils of the Gymnasium.

As soon as her secondary education made it possible, she began her academic studies, under the supervision of several university professors.

After her tenth year I thought that the time had come for her to acquire some idea of the arts. We started a singing class, which aimed at encouraging composition and the pupil's initiative.

We allowed her to choose the instrument she wanted to play. There is no need for me to speak of all the boredom, the loss of time and the disappointment caused to many children by the traditional piano lessons, whereas every instrument helps to develop an ear for music, and a free choice on the part of the child gives a much better guarantee of enjoyment and of the required effort. Juliana had liked music from an early age. She was always singing and humming all sorts of tunes and songs. She chose the violin and studied it very satisfactorily for several years.

When it came to painting and drawing, I sought advice from Albert Roelofs. Juliana joined a class led by Mrs Roelofs, who had been educated at the Academy of Arts in The Hague. She began by developing the children's artistic feeling with the help of applied art; they had to make and execute their own designs. Later Mrs Roelofs taught them both drawing and history of art. At Juliana's request, she continued the art-history lessons until her marriage.

If the history of art is not treated as a part of history, as an old parchment unrolled before a gaping class, in other words, not in the way of the art historian; if one teaches the pupil to see old and new art through the eyes of an *artist*, then all its

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beauty will begin to live in its perspective, its lines and its colours. That is how Mrs Roelofs saw her task.

One day I asked Mr Roelofs, very diffidently, if he would mind having a look at my own work and giving his opinion of it. As I said before, I had been working entirely on my own after my first instruction, and the results were not particularly impressive.

During the First World War I devoted my hours of leisure to drawing, sometimes in colours. Of course I could only rarely afford the time. It was not only working with paper and crayon that I enjoyed; the reason why this pastime meant so much to me was to an equal extent the escape it offered from the worries and pressures of those years. It was always a true relaxation.

Naturally it turned out when my work was judged that my drawing technique was insufficient. The same defect recurred in all my work. In one little pastel study of the surroundings of the palace gardens in The Hague, however, Mr Roelofs saw 'more than dilettantism'. We agreed that I should take lessons, and he was willing to act as my teacher. His serious professional approach opened up a new world for me, full of inspiration and artistic enjoyment. With all the forces that remained after my daily work I threw myself into drawing and the study of nature.

With Albert Roelofs as teacher this meant serious hard work. At first I was only allowed to draw. He wanted me to master that technique thoroughly. In early spring we went out to observe the grass, the twigs and the leaves, all that marvellous life of nature, and put it to paper in minute detail. The artist's enthusiasm inspired the pupil. My sketch-book began to live. At first it was only a matter of representing subtle details of nature, a twig or a leaf, but soon a landscape grew out of all these small things, with trees, fields, hills, clouds, houses and mills; landscapes with their contrasts of light and shadow. I could indulge my love of nature to the full!

Later that spring I was allowed to work in colours, mainly with the crayon, because its technique is the same as in

drawing. Thus summer and autumn went by; I seem to remember that I had my first lesson in oil-painting from Mr Roelofs in the beginning of the following winter; but then he died suddenly on New Year's Eve of 1920, deeply regretted by his family and all his pupils.

I have already said that his enthusiasm had an inspiring effect on all those he taught, but he gave more than that. His high ideals as an artist and his conception of art, his constant effort to realize his ideals, all this marked his teaching and left an ineradicable impression on his pupils.

After his death I decided to ask his friend and fellow-artist Van Konijnenburg to take over from him. Van Konijnenburg was in every fibre a draughtsman, so I hoped to continue in Roelofs's spirit. The lessons were very interesting. Van Konijnenburg was an entirely different type of artist. While Roelofs went out into nature and absorbed everything in the way that I have described, Van Konijnenburg composed his studies of nature at home. He was a master of drawing and an excellent teacher of composition. His work was always imposing and done on an enormous scale. Within a few minutes he produced a folio-sized sketch of an imaginary landscape as an illustration of his theory of composition, and added life to it in the twinkling of an eye, by means of an animal or a human being.

He left his pupil completely free in the choice of subject, so long as an attempt was made to apply the theory he had been discussing.

He assisted me with great kindness in the preparation of an exhibition of my work which was to travel in the Netherlands East and West Indies.

The reader may already have suspected that there was a distinct opposition of artistic temperament between Van Konijnenburg and myself. In the end I had to admit it and confess to him how I longed for the lessons of someone who loved nature for its own sake, in other words, of a landscape painter. My drawing I wanted to continue on my own; I felt I had reached the stage where this was possible. Van Konijnenburg took it very well and was quite willing to give way to another teacher, since I intended to concentrate on

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landscape painting. I shall always remain all the more grateful to him because of his understanding attitude.

I then chose Van Soest, who taught me for a little under two years, a period terminated by the Second World War. Van Soest died during the German occupation, and since then I have been working on my own.

My art is a part of religion to me. I can spend hours in God's creation, absorbing it and trying to understand its truth and character. Then I take my drawing-pencil and brush to represent it as its Creator made it. Contact with Him therefore is the main thing; in the second place there is the faithful representation of nature, which always gives me a thrill of joy.

When Juliana was a child she always longed for the company of other children. We did all we could to satisfy her by inviting children of her age and later by sending her to youth camps. When she was in her teens she went to summer camps under the experienced direction of Miss Barger at the Aardhuis, not far from Het Loo. Girls from different walks of life gathered there, and lectures were held on various subjects. Later Juliana joined the staff and took part in the preparatory work. At the same time she had our consent to organize week-ends at Het Loo. Her friends brought other friends, and an attempt was always made to collect interesting people of her own age. These week-ends provided Juliana with a large new circle of acquaintances.

When the nineteen-twenties had arrived, I could no longer refer to my youth in the present tense; I was approaching middle age. It is not always easy to accept that fact. Much that is familiar remains behind, one goes towards the uncertain and the unknown, things that have not yet taken shape.

As I said before, my personal problems had been solved. A void remained. The tension they create in one's life had disappeared. Things seemed disappointingly simple. Problems and ideals both compel us to liberate ourselves from the narrow routine of our daily existence; they compel us to

test our forces. Their company makes us live in a mountainous country, on the peaks at one time, in the valleys at another. There is always tension and an absorbing variety of experience; but now the future seemed to stretch out like a wide monotonous plain, which invited a superficial view of life. I felt that I would have to struggle in order to maintain the level of my inner existence. It seemed as if I had lost all my determination to seek higher things. A long time passed before I had overcome this feeling of loss. In the end I realized that a riper, stronger life was on the way, which would often compensate for all that had been left behind in the past.

When life had settled down after the First World War, my mother-in-law visited us more than once, staying for several weeks as we had done in Mecklenburg before the war. After the revolution in Germany, an experience she had passed through at an advanced age, and the subsequent economic decline, her visits to Holland, in The Hague or at Het Loo, afforded her some much-needed relaxation. Sometimes they coincided with my mother's annual visits to Het Loo in the autumn. We went for long rides, the two grandmothers in my little trap with the bays, which were able to keep pace with us on horseback through woods and heathland. They enjoyed it enormously, and what a delight it was for them when we joined them to savour the picnic they had brought.

The last time she came to The Hague was in the early spring of 1922. She looked forward to spending Hendrik's birthday with us, after so many years when she had not been able to present her birthday wishes to him personally. Alas, it was not to be the joyful occasion we had hoped for. A few days before she contracted pneumonia and a high fever, so that on the nineteenth of April her son could see her only for a few moments. She died on the twenty-second. Her son Adolf arrived just in time; her daughter, my sister-in-law Oldenburg, found her no longer alive. All the children living in Holland were with her in her last moments.

Her death caused great sorrow to her children and me.

For her to die in Holland was nevertheless the happiest way in the circumstances. She had the quiet dignified funeral

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procession she deserved, from the Noordeinde to the station, and on arrival in Schwerin she could be quietly laid to rest in the cathedral next to her husband, thus avoiding all the obstacles that the public or the authorities might have put in the way of any ceremony.

I should now like to say something about my holidays, particularly about those I took in the years after the First World War to get the relaxation I needed in order to be always fresh for my work.

My husband's former country was closed for ever, to me at least, and he himself could only go there on rare occasions and for short periods, and even then had to be careful to remain unnoticed. Our holidays now meant travelling, instead of visiting our family as we used to do. There were only a few exceptions. The first was the second wedding of my brother-in-law Adolf which we attended. Fritzzi was no longer allowed to set foot in Schwerin or in his castle; the family lived as if in exile, they could not take part in any public activity. The wedding therefore took place within the walls of their house at Ludwigslust. All that was visible from the outside was the passing of a small group of friends of the House of Mecklenburg who wanted to offer their congratulations.

The second exception was when Mother and I went to Arolsen with Juliana, when she had come of age, to see my uncle and aunt. Our primary purpose was to unite the three generations in Mother's parental home. It was a wonderful and unforgettable experience for us, to see Mother in the surroundings where she had spent her youth.

We also went on a trip to Schloss Waldeck, which is situated high up on a rock overlooking the river Eder in the valley. The ancestral castle of the Waldecks is a proud ruin, still suggestive of its strength as a fortress in the old days. Below it in the river a barrage had been built.

The third exception was one day I spent at Dobbin, incognito; it was the last time before we sold the house a few years later.

In 1921 I went to Norway for the first time, on board the

Merope. This would give my husband the opportunity to spend his holiday in the mountains; he was a keen climber and had spent a few holidays in Switzerland during the war. It was the first of many visits we paid to the land of the fiords.

We visited several other countries: Sweden, France and also England; after my husband's death came Scotland's turn. Sometimes we went to the winter sports, but we usually took our holidays in summer. We adapted them to Juliana's age, to what she could do and what she could enjoy. As a rule we asked a few young people to keep her company. On a few occasions we went without her, on another honeymoon as it were.

I shall say a little more about Norway, because its landscape is so particularly impressive and has such a very strong appeal. I do not mean to say that other countries did not interest us or that they have left us no pleasant memories. I shall say something about them presently.

In Norway we penetrated deeply into the country, traveling with rucksacks or a hold-all, and spending the night in primitive little hotels, usually something between a hotel and a mountain hut. I always took my painter's kit.

Sometimes when our party was larger and my baggage assumed artistic proportions we were escorted by a little caravan of Norwegian horses, which also stood us in good stead when we had to cross the little mountain streams, which might happen as often as eight times in the course of a day's walk. We also went out in Norwegian traps—motor-cars were fortunately still rare—which enabled us to look at all the beauties of nature at our leisure and, even more important, to absorb them. Sometimes we went on the lakes and fiords by boat.

I shall not attempt to describe this magnificent country with its endless variety, its sun and splendour of clouds, its midnight sun which remains unforgettable to those who have seen it, its rivers, lakes, frozen lakes and fiords, its coast with rocks and islands and its beautiful sea, its splendid braes in the north which run down to the fiords and then suddenly break off. They tell the story of a mighty creation, which shows man his smallness and makes him silent. The churches

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and a few lonely houses seemed no more than dots against the background of the mountains, the small fields on top of the masses of rock, laboriously tilled by human hands, were tiny green mats compared to these giants.

I sometimes found the effect of all this so overpowering that I was unable to continue and stayed behind while the others went on, to contemplate it in solitude. How near one comes to one's Creator in those surroundings, and how much strength they gave me for what awaited me at home! I was enlightened and strengthened in spirit when I resumed my task.

Holidays mean rest, relaxation, liberation from the treadmill, but it is at these moments that life becomes difficult, that the struggle breaks out which prepares the way for true inner harmony. Once this has been attained it is followed by unimpeded inner growth and purification, which are greatly assisted by the indescribable and incomparable grandeur of nature in this country.

I should also like to say something about my visit to the Borgund church, which always held a special appeal for me. We went there by car, driving through a splendid landscape until the road entered a narrow ravine, the sides of which nearly met high above our heads. A wild torrent with countless rapids occupied the larger part of the ravine, leaving only a narrow strip for the road. In the bends we sometimes wondered if our car would not get stuck! We found ourselves in semi-darkness instead of brilliant sunlight. Then suddenly we saw the light again, as we entered a wide valley between high mountains, with green fields and a small village in the middle; and there on our left was the Borgund church. How small it seemed in its surroundings! We got out of the car to inspect it more closely. It is built of tarred wood which has resisted the severe cold for centuries, ever since it was built after the return of the first crusaders to Norway. Its strange beauty cannot fail to make a deep impression: a tower of roofs built on top of each other, surmounted by ancient symbols of pre-Christian times, and consecrated here. Underneath them a belt of crosses, one on the point of each roof and two over the doors, pointing out emphatically to those

who had not noticed the cross-shape of the ground plan that this church was built for Christ.

All round the church there was an open space, sheltered by the lowest of the roofs, which was where churchgoers used to leave their arms before they went to meet the Lord. What better proof could be required of the sincerity of their religious feeling! Do we disarm, out of love for Christ and for our fellows, before we enter our pew?

Finally a word about our visits to other countries. I went to Paris several times: unofficially with Mother in the spring of 1898; officially with Hendrik on a return visit to President Fallières; semi-officially for the colonial exhibition. We spent several holidays in the Vosges, where I did many pen-drawings of picturesque houses and streets in the little towns.

We went twice to Abisko, in Swedish Lapland, on lake Torneträsk. Both there and in northern Norway we crossed the polar circle. It is a great experience to see the midnight sun for the first time and to discover the splendour of colours in the sky over those wide and desolate lands with their mountains, lakes, reindeer and their vegetation which decreases towards the north. This vegetation has a special charm, testifying to the bitter struggle it has to wage against the elements. The birches and alders which cover much of the ground near Abisko are reduced to the size of shrubs. Firs give up being trees even further south; the last of them that I discovered were crouching on the rocks. An old fir tree with a heavy trunk had adopted the habits of the ivy. Many parts are covered with blueberry plants and with charming little flowers and other plants which stand up to arctic conditions. In spring it exhales the soft smell of budding life.

Some of the Laplanders still live as nomads, in camps of huts which each builds for himself. They are herdsmen and own reindeer. We visited several settlements of this people in Sweden and Norway.

This brings me to the story of an important development in my husband's life. I remember that it occurred shortly after the death of his beloved mother. I am referring to the

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new depth that was revealed in him, which made him see Christ as Universal Love.

I once received a letter which in my view contains the essential truth about him in this sentence: 'He obeyed Christ with inimitable devotion.'

Wherever he went, Hendrik imitated the example of his Master in love for his fellow-men. He had always been a warm-hearted man and he had shown it, but after the turning-point in his life helping mankind became his primary aim. He offered spiritual comfort and assistance to all those who crossed his path and prepared their way to God through Christ.

This profound transformation of a life so near to me did not fail to impress me deeply. Having been such a close witness of a miracle done by Him to Whom I had entrusted myself, I saw Christ in an entirely new light, the light of His all-embracing power and goodness; as the only source from which all good springs. I saw Him in my mind as the Universal One, who manifests Himself everywhere in the world, in and through people regardless of their religion and the colour of their skins. Through Hendrik I saw Christ's love act upon mankind and society.

To Juliana and myself the peace that Hendrik radiated and above all his powerful conviction made him like a rock. We were to enjoy its blessing for twelve years.

In the autumn of 1927 I read a book called *Selection from the Speeches of Sadhu Sundar Singh*, with a foreword by Mr Van Boetzelaer van Dubbeldam. It had been published in June 1922 on the occasion of Sundar's visit to this country and was intended to acquaint the Dutch people with the great Christian apostle of India. This book and a subsequent meeting with the author of the foreword introduced me to Sadhu Sundar Singh, his preaching and its application in his life, a very rich one spiritually. As his visit to our country had taken place five years before, I never had an opportunity to meet him personally.

Having pointed out that Sundar subordinates everything to a personal encounter with Christ, Van Boetzelaer makes this revealing remark in his foreword: 'With this contact

everything becomes so very simple. How simple seems even all this man's amazing experience when he himself tells it and sees it in this light. It seems much less amazing that he should have such experiences than that we should not have them.' Van Boetzelaer goes on to say that Sundar recognizes exceptional spiritual experience and revelations only when they are in accordance with the Bible, and that he rejects everything that conflicts with it. This is inevitable in view of Sundar's complete absorption in Christ. He addressed himself to all churches and denominations.

The things Van Boetzelaer said about him struck me as so new and important that I bought everything written by him and about him. I read and re-read these writings for years. They included a biography by Mrs Parker, who emphasized that to us westerners, obsessed by the materialistic spirit of the times, Sundar represented the supremacy of the spiritual. I was also struck by Sundar's idea that the spirit of God awakes (within the limitation of our spirit—which is part of God's creation) the consciousness of His presence in man on earth.

Whenever I read Sundar it seemed to me that Christ's own life became present to me, such was his intimacy with our Saviour and the desire to share His suffering. I can say without fear of exaggeration that Sundar's love for Christ knew no bounds.

Sundar sought suffering, not for its own sake but in order to follow his Saviour's example. It was his dearest wish to die as a witness for him.

He regarded it as his most important duty to penetrate into the high and inaccessible mountains of Tibet, whose scattered population worshipped the Dalai Lama, hated foreigners and despised every other religion. As these people were cruel and uncivilized Sundar was constantly in danger of his life. At the same time he was threatened by the hazards of nature. He was preserved from the latter, but not from torture at the hands of men.

Sundar always emphasized the peace of the heart, which not only passes understanding but also enlightens it. Without that peace he could not live.

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In his boyhood, when he was unable to find the peace he sought, he decided that he had to convince himself of its existence, either in this life or—as he thought as a Hindu—in the next. He planned to throw himself under the train which passed the garden of his parents' home early every morning. His last desperate prayer before the train came was left unanswered by Krishna; but Christ answered.

Sundar was a realist and did not expect everyone to take on the burden he had assumed; but he always stressed everyone's duty to live and act according to the spirit of Christ, without compromise or falsity. Those who want this are assured of the Guidance of the Holy Spirit.

I was also interested in Sundar's ideas on other religions, which often revealed new aspects to me. One of his influences on me came from his conviction that the Saviour should be brought to the nations by ways that are familiar to them. He himself set the example in this respect.

How tremendous Sundar's message was for me and for the whole western world: that in the end everything depended on the living relation between man and Christ. And this message came from a man who had proved his readiness to accept all its consequences.

On our return from England after the war, when I found these books and read them again, I was struck by the similarity of spirit between our resistance movement and Sundar Singh. It now seemed to me as if I was meeting a resistance fighter. Sacrifice, persecution, torture and death: they always arouse the same things in a human being and weld men and souls together.

The reader will understand that this discovery made a lasting impression on me.

Though I had *learned* the Truth as it was offered to me, first by Hendrik and immediately afterwards by Sundar Singh, I had not yet made it *my own*. There is a wide difference between the two, and nearly everybody clings to his own limited ideas in his religious life and is unwilling to give them up. It requires courage to abandon everything for the sake of the One.

We carry far too much spiritual ballast with us on our life's way, which has no relevance to our bond with Christ and even endangers a more intimate contact with Him. When God made me understand this, I did not hesitate. I threw my ballast overboard and at the same time removed all the obstacles which impeded my progress towards higher things.

Christ led me to the experience of overwhelming Reality like one who hears the Gospel for the first time. It is impossible to express all that this means in the way of liberation, space, joy.

How much nearer I felt to an understanding of the meaning of Christmas Eve, which henceforth floods my path with light. How much nearer to His suffering, which was fully borne by the glory of His love for mankind, until it was absorbed by it through His victory over death. This new understanding inspired in me a longing for the Holy Ghost.

It also entailed a complete purification, and the attempt to create something in perfect accordance with my new insight. Before anything else, this something had to be an inspired love for the real and universal Christ. I had been gravely lacking in this love, even though I had long ago resolved to remain faithful to Him even when it demanded the sacrifice of myself. How pale and feeble my love still was, compared to the sacred fire that burned in Hendrik and Sundar.

This experience awoke something in me that was almost stronger than myself: a desire to give myself entirely to work for Christ and mankind. I have always carried this desire deep in my heart, but it could never be fulfilled as long as the duties of my office took up most of my time. It is only afterwards that I have been able to follow it.

The same experience also made me realize that Christ in His Fullness points the way towards the solution of all the problems that face us in the world and for which we have the greatest difficulty in finding solutions.

From that time the standards and conventions of this world, which had proved so ineffective in their sunken state, had lost all their value for me. I discarded them as I would have done an old worn coat.

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While all this was happening inside me, I realized that I had become a world citizen in the spiritual sense. This I have always remained.

I am also convinced that what I have tried to express here is experienced by an increasing number of people, although everyone makes these wonderful discoveries in his own way.

Looking back on my encounter with God through Christ after many years, I see it as my preparation and spiritual strengthening for the task that was ahead of me.

One of my vivid memories of that process of spiritual growth is of how I tried to penetrate to the hidden truth of the Scripture stories, and that I began to wonder what the story of the rich young man meant to me personally.

I never stopped thinking about what I did not understand.

I set no great store by worldly goods. I had been much more strongly attached to the spiritual ballast from my own past which I mentioned before. These were the riches I had to give up if I wanted to listen to Christ's words: one thing thou lackest . . . and follow Me.

As I saw the rich young man in the end, he exemplifies human selfishness and narrowness of spirit, in complete contrast to Christ's sacrificing and saving love. It is our task to banish the rich young man to the realm of fiction, in our lives and in this world, by the strength of that love.

It seems to me that it was precisely because my meditations always had to take place in between my duties that they were such a healthy and enlightening influence on my work.

The bond with God and the vision of man and the world that it implies became the force that supported me in all that was to befall mankind and myself, and more: it was also what gave me the wisdom for my decisions, it was the mortar that united my actions in all their variety and made them one whole.

On completion of her eighteenth year, on the 30th of April 1927, Juliana had attained her majority under the constitution, which meant that she would act as Regent when necessary and would be my successor when I died. We celebrated the occasion at an intimate dinner-party in her honour, where

she appeared for the first time as a *débutante* in the full bloom of youth. I made a speech and we drank her health; she replied very sweetly and tactfully. I shall never forget that voice and those heart-felt words from a child to her mother. Later that evening we had been invited to see the illuminations in town and to go round the Hofvijver, the lake next to the parliament buildings, in illuminated boats. It was like a fairy-tale.

Juliana's first independent public appearance came after the cyclone that ravaged the little town of Borculo. We went down together and divided the task that awaited us: visiting the people and inspecting the damage. From the day of her majority Juliana took part in all official functions.

That same summer she was confirmed, in silence and in all simplicity, as she had requested. No members of the family had been invited. The ceremony took place in the Juliana church during a service conducted by the pastor, Mr Troelstra; Pastor Welter confirmed his pupil. Some fifteen others were confirmed at the same time.

Miss Oosterlee had studied French at Groningen and had told Juliana many stories of her undergraduate days, which contributed to Juliana's interest in academic studies and university life. For years it had been her wish to be allowed to study at Leyden. We found it an excellent idea and were willing to meet her wish to be treated as an equal of the other students.

She was matriculated and on the 10th of September 1927 she moved into 't Waerle, a house in Katwijk near Leyden, with three friends, and the next day began her novitiate at the Women Students' Club. All four were tense with expectation when they rode out into the unknown future. They soon started calling themselves the 'Merry Sea-stars'. The following week-end they returned home full of stories, enthusiastic and dead tired.

A little later I heard that in a competition for the song of her year Juliana's entry had been selected. I was more upset than pleased: was this the end of equality already? But Juliana

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told me that all the entries had been anonymous; only after making their choice did the jury open the envelope which revealed the name of the author.

When the clubs of her year formed themselves, Juliana came to belong to one called *De Zestigpoot*.

Matron to the Sea-stars at Katwijk was Miss Schoch, director of my private affairs in Apeldoorn and surroundings. She accomplished her task with tact and ability, assisted by Freule Van Sytzama. The Sea-stars formed a true community; they went everywhere together.

All parents who have a child at the university know how great the transition is to the student world and how many aspects there are to it. Juliana's case was the more difficult because there was no precedent.

Our adviser in academic matters and intermediary with the Rector Magnificus and the Senate was Van Lynden van Sandenburg, who was vice-president of the Council of State at the time as well as Lord High Chamberlain. He had already advised us very satisfactorily on appointments of university lecturers for Juliana, and thanks to him an entirely new and original arrangement was made for her, which showed a true feeling for the situation and sympathy with the wishes of a modern young woman.

After the novitiate Juliana's lectures began. She attended a great variety of them and visited all the museums and institutes. She showed herself a cheerful and active student, a carefree soul in the best sense of the word.

The surroundings at Het Loo are eminently suited for all the activities that young people enjoy, and the house offers plenty of room for social gatherings. This opportunity was not neglected during Juliana's years as an undergraduate. The Sea-stars and the *Zestigpoot* visited her often, and the 'To Vivat' and other students' songs were heard until late at night, accompanied on my piano. Custom did not allow us to be present, but we heard the stories in great detail afterwards.

Not having taken her school-leaving examination, Juliana could not be admitted to the normal academic examinations.

After the first year, when serious study becomes necessary, she lacked a proper incentive and a programme appeared indispensable.

I remember with gratitude the initiative of the Academic Senate which asked our consent to a carefully prepared plan of studies. It was agreed that Juliana would take one obligatory preliminary examination in international law, with Professor Van Eysinga as her teacher, and would choose two others herself. Her choice fell on comparative religion and modern Dutch literature, taught by Professor Kristensen and Professor Verwey respectively.

She was given from January till December to prepare for these three examinations. In June she was examined by Professor Kristensen, in September by Professor Verwey and in December by Professor Van Eysinga. She satisfied all three. The main thing was that she should give evidence of independent study and a broad understanding of her subjects. Thus in the case of international law she was not required to know all the clauses of international agreements, but to understand their tenor and to know if and how and where they had been interpreted and applied during the war. The point was that she should prove to have acquired a practical knowledge of her subjects.

After the last examination she was informed by Professor Van Eysinga that an honorary doctorate of literature and philosophy had been conferred upon her. The decision was explained in a speech by Professor Huizinga, who presented her with her degree. After the ceremony in the Senate Room and the young doctor's ride through the town with her ushers we had a festive dinner at home in The Hague, in accordance with university tradition.

The years at Leyden meant a great deal to Juliana, not only because of the academic training and the knowledge she acquired but because they gave her ample opportunity to meet people of her own age and to learn from her fellow-students.

Juliana has always felt a strong need of human contact. It is a dominant trait of her character. From her childhood

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it made her feel free and happy when she was regarded and appreciated as a human being wherever she was. She was disappointed, and indeed felt it as a wrong done to her person, when this did not happen; except of course on occasions where her official position dominated.

I have spoken of my earliest encounters with the intellectualism of the age; with the conception of life in which human intelligence is not held in check by a deep spiritual life. The consequence of those experiences was that I maintained a suspicious reserve towards the scientific type of mind.

Basically my attitude in this respect had changed but little in the following years; I felt as far removed as ever from the scientific spirit. My mistake was to group all students of science under one heading. My experience of Leyden taught me to see things differently. The paternal interest of the professors in their students and the sense of responsibility they showed not only as guardians and promulgators of their science but as educators impressed us deeply.

In the eyes of the university the fact that Juliana studied at Leyden was a proof of her parents' confidence in its ability to educate the future Queen. The programme of studies it submitted proved its intention to take this task very seriously.

For me personally Leyden meant the first conscious meeting with a harmonic fusion of science and the best that God has put in man. This moved me to revise my attitude towards scientists in general. When they showed that they had attained this harmonic fusion, I henceforth approached them openly and with confidence.

This is not to say that my objections against the too intellectually minded were removed. How could it have been so, as I was to be a witness once again of all the evils that the unrestrained working of the human intelligence caused to Europe and other continents?

In order to smoothen the transition from the university to the hard world outside for Juliana we went on a skiing holiday to Oberstdorf with a party of young people. The lovely snow,

the mountain air, the pleasure given by the new sport and the cheerfulness of our party, everything combined to make this holiday serve its purpose. From then on we went to the winter sports every year until Juliana's marriage.

This was not the only compensation for Juliana's return to the hard world. We also spent a summer holiday in Norway. Once again we took inexhaustible delight in the country's beauty, going out on the water or riding or walking. Juliana and her friend, who were at the age for long climbing and walking tours, went on many trips and the older members of the party also showed considerable energy. We always went out for the whole day. I remember well how excited the young people were one day when they came back and told us they had seen an eagle near his nest on the Bitihorn.

We returned from Norway by way of Copenhagen, so that the two young women could see something of this capital with its many memories of close relations with our country. On our way we crossed the Sound between Helsingborg and Helsingør, a trip that takes no more than twenty to thirty minutes. Seeing how narrow these straits are, one discovers the explanation of the endless struggle that has been carried on across it. The Sound serves as an invitation to battle.

Near Helsingør we visited the Kronborg, the ancient bastion on the Sound, where the scene of Shakespeare's *Hamlet* is laid. In Copenhagen we saw Thorwaldsen's masterpieces in the Vor Frue Kirke.

Mother's seventieth and seventy-fifth birthdays, on the 2nd of August 1928 and 1933, received particular attention. In 1929 the nation commemorated solemnly her arrival on Dutch territory fifty years before.

After the wedding at Arolsen on the 7th of February 1879 she set foot on Dutch soil on the 10th. On the day when half a century had passed, a state dinner was given in The Hague in her honour; I conveyed to her the gratitude and homage of the Dutch people.

This exceptional jubilee was also celebrated in Amsterdam

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later that year. Once again we gathered in the Nieuwe Kerk. Burgomaster De Vlugt made a speech of great feeling.

In 1928 the Netherlands were hosts to the ninth Olympic Games. Mother and the three of us attended the most important events. We saw the victory of our compatriot, Pahud de Mortanges, Olympic champion in the 'military'. On the Zuyderzee we saw the sailing regatta, won by Olav of Norway.

Hendrik celebrated his twenty years' presidency of the Red Cross in 1928, and his silver jubilee in 1933. He received many marks of affection and appreciation. He continued to devote his energies to this task until his death.

In 1929 the economic crisis began which was soon to affect the whole of our national life. Like other European countries we had to cope with unemployment on an unprecedented scale, a problem that cried out for a solution. Unfortunately those who had to deal with it were not ready for problems of this size. Most people in this country had not suffered enough themselves. The men who should have found a quick, businesslike solution were lacking in imagination and courage as well as in enterprise and the true will to break out of the deadlock.

A serious obstacle was the apparent impossibility for the bureaucracy to speed up its cumbersome procedures; the official hierarchy worked as slowly as ever when private persons were willing to take part in the fight against unemployment and suggested projects.

My visits in those years were usually connected with the crisis. I gave special attention to measures that were designed to reduce unemployment, and to the conditions in which people lived. I saw many houses and visited many of the specially employed and the projects on which they worked. Where they were concerned I inspected the camps in which they lived, far from their homes, and satisfied myself as to the furnishing and the amenities.

The autumn of 1930 was a grave and worrying period for me. A member of the household endured long and grievous

suffering which lasted until March of the following year. She showed great courage and was an example to those about her, not least in her spiritual elevation. We were so pre-occupied by it and so anxious not to disturb her that we accepted only the most necessary engagements.

When we received the news of her death, Juliana and I went from The Hague to Het Loo and accompanied her when she left the house for the last time. The evening before we had had a short service for members of the household in the chapel where she was placed on a bier. I conducted this service and Juliana read the lesson.

During the last months of 1930 and the early part of the following year I occupied myself with the preparation of the exhibition of my paintings, which was to travel through the Indies and afterwards in Surinam and the Dutch Antilles. It was more than just a matter of painting and drawing. A great deal of imagination and many discussions were needed to make the exhibition serve its purpose, which was to give a feeling of home to our countrymen abroad and an idea of the Netherlands to members of the empire, so as to strengthen our ties with them.

In view of Mother's advanced age I never went very far afield on my holidays during the last years of her life. We always returned to Soestdijk in time for her birthday on the 2nd of August and then stayed with her for another fortnight.

In March 1934 Juliana and I left her for a few days and went to Het Loo for a little fresh air and a change of scene. Except for a slight cold she seemed in good condition. We meant to stay away for only four or five days, a short winter holiday that I often took to escape from the obligations of life in town. Juliana always assisted Miss Schoch in her welfare work in Apeldoorn.

This time, however, we soon received a telephone call from the doctor, who advised me to return immediately because Mother had suddenly fallen ill and her condition gave rise to anxiety. We left at once. A few tense days followed. Juliana and I were with her at the Voorhout night and day and Hendrik paid several short visits, with the doctor's

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consent. On the 20th of March God called her to Him. On the 27th we accompanied her to her last resting-place in the vaults of the Nieuwe Kerk in Delft, where she lies beside my father.

Since the end of her Regency she had devoted herself entirely to suffering humanity. The warmth of her interest and her intuitive understanding of the circumstances of those who suffered as well as of those who nursed them caused many a heart to rejoice in the course of the years. Mother's feelings went out to all and she was a regular visitor in all classes of society.

The news of her death caused general grief and regret among our people. We were particularly moved by the small tokens of love which were laid beside her bier, and perhaps even more by the expressions of those who came to say a last farewell. We as members of the family were affectionately included in this spontaneous demonstration of love.

At her funeral the national anthem of Waldeck-Pyrmont was played for the last time.

It was a sad task to make the arrangements for the funeral, but I was grateful for the opportunity to express her faith and my own to a large number of people. In these difficult days, as well as in those that were to follow, Juliana stood by me all the time.

As soon as my duties allowed, I went to Switzerland for a rest of some weeks. Hendrik, who had taken the waters in Karlsbad, returned before I left. Juliana had accepted an invitation to go and stay with my cousin Alice at Kensington Palace in London; this gave her a chance to see a little more of England.

I had hardly passed six days in Brigue when Mr Snouckaert, who accompanied me for the Queen's Secretariat, came to me and prepared me for alarming news concerning Hendrik's health. He had received a telegram from The Hague, which the doctors had preferred not to send to me directly. When he came to the point, Snouckaert told me that Hendrik had had a long and serious heart-attack at the Red Cross office. As the doctors did not exclude the possibility of a recurrence, they requested my return.

I left on the same day, deeply worried and anxious. The Swiss authorities showed themselves very helpful.

When I arrived there had been no change in Hendrik's condition, and it continued unchanged for some days. Juliana intended to come back on Wednesday the 4th of July; I kept her fully informed.

The day before her return all those who had been close to Mother gathered at her house in the Voorhout for the last time before it was closed. It was a disappointment for Hendrik not to be able to come; he had so many dear memories of the house and of Mother and would have liked to be present at the dinner, but I had to go alone. His condition that day had seemed as before, but we had hardly sat down when the telephone rang. Would I come immediately, a car was on the way for me. Although nothing further was said, I understood everything. The heart had stopped while he was still talking to a nurse. When I arrived, he was no longer alive.

It was not easy for me to tell Juliana the worst by telephone. She left England by *Batavier* that same evening. At six o'clock on Wednesday morning I was waiting for her on the quay at the Hook of Holland. Who could have foreseen such a homecoming?

Long before he died my husband and I had discussed the meaning of death and the eternal Life that follows it. We both had the certainty of faith that death is the beginning of Life, and therefore had promised each other that we would have white funerals. This agreement was now observed.

Hendrik's white funeral, as his last gesture to the nation, made a profound impression and set many people thinking.

Once again I arranged a funeral service, in accordance with our view of death and Life.

This story of my life would become much too long if I tried to express what these two lives which were cut off so shortly after one another have meant to Juliana and me.

After the funeral we went to Norway to rest and to recover, and stayed there for six weeks.

In the early spring 1935 I received an invitation from King Leopold to visit the World Fair in Brussels that summer. This

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was less than a year after my husband's death. I saw that this visit could help our friendly relations with Belgium and accepted the invitation, on the understanding that there would be no festivities and that my only official visit would be to the Fair.

Leopold and Astrid observed this condition very strictly. Juliana accompanied them to the horse show without me.

It was a charming visit. We stayed at Laeken, but spent most of our time with our hosts and their children at Stuyvenberg. Juliana and Astrid, who were not far apart in age, became good friends.

Where were we to go for our holiday in the summer of 1935? This problem was difficult to solve, but it was very necessary for Juliana, after all we had been through, to get away from it all and receive new and fresh impressions.

In the end we decided on Scotland with its pronounced national characteristics, its folklore and customs and old castles and picturesque towns. After the sunny countryside at the Ruygenhoek this magnificent sombre landscape was quite a change, although the large expanses of heathland sometimes reminded us strongly of Gelderland.

Juliana received many invitations from people of her age to come to tea or spend the week-end at old castles. One of the castles she visited was Glamis, Macbeth's castle, where the present Queen Mother of England used to live in her youth.

We attended a party where nearly everybody was in national costume and where the traditional reels were performed.

It was while we were in Scotland that we received the news of Queen Astrid's death in a car accident in Switzerland. We were deeply upset that such a sweet young woman and mother should pass away so suddenly, someone who could still have meant so much for her children and husband, personally as well as in connection with his duties as a king, and for the whole of the Belgian people. She was deeply regretted and mourned in Belgium.

Nineteen-thirty-six was another Olympic year. The winter games were to be held in Bavaria. Juliana and I had decided to spend our winter holiday nearby, at Igls above Innsbruck;

she went to the games several times as a spectator, and met many old and new acquaintances.

In Igls we were visited by Bernhard zur Lippe-Biesterfeld, who had come from Paris in his car. He joined our group for a few days and took part in the skiing lessons.

Juliana and he met again at the games in Garmisch-Partenkirchen. No need to say what followed. Subsequently he visited us a few times in Holland, strictly incognito. Some good Dutch friends of long standing helped him, and his visits remained entirely unnoticed. He asked to be allowed to pay a longer visit on our summer holiday, when his exacting professional duties would permit it.

We found a relatively quiet spot in Switzerland at Weissenburg, where he was not likely to be noticed. During this holiday Juliana and Bernhard became engaged, but we decided to keep it a secret for the time being. Bernhard returned to his work and Juliana and I went home.

The insatiable news hunger of Press and public soon compelled us to announce the engagement, if at least we wanted to make the announcement ourselves. On the 8th of September I informed the people of the Netherlands of the happy news. The engaged couple's arrival in The Hague in Bernhard's little Ford car is still fresh in the memory of many of us.

On the 7th of January 1937 the civil marriage ceremony was performed in The Hague Town Hall: it received a religious blessing in the Grote Kerk. The date was chosen because it was my parents' wedding-day.

I did not want this event to push Christmas into the background. I had the Noordeinde decorated in such a way that everything pointed to this feast and I allowed our annual party with a group of staff members to be broadcast by radio.

In contrast to the abundant decoration of the town, the palace in its green-and-white Christmas attire gave an impression of quiet and restraint. The Christmas tree for the party with the staff stood in the hall of the Huis ten Bosch, where everything that was not white plaster had been covered in white for the occasion. The green tree with its burning candles, seen against this background, was enough to take

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one's breath away. It created an effect which no one who was not there could possibly imagine. Our guests were still talking about it a long time afterwards.

As regards the wedding and the celebrations that went with it, I wanted to ignore the usual protocol and to do things in the style of the young people themselves. The result was a series of delightful parties with nearly all their friends and acquaintances. A long cortège of bridesmaids and ushers attended the wedding.

The departure on the honeymoon presented a genuine problem, due to the curiosity of journalists and public. As the young couple had a natural desire to be left in peace, they were practically prevented from leaving after the wedding-breakfast, as is customary. They decided to leave in secret the day after, and they arranged a mock-departure on the day itself, which came off beautifully. After the wedding-breakfast they left by car, went as far as the stables and crept back unnoticed a little later. I had organized a dance for the younger guests, to fill up the void when the young couple had left. When the dancing had started, at about half past nine, they appeared in the ballroom! For a moment all were stupefied; then enthusiasm burst forth. Of course their presence lent a particular charm to the party. It ended with a 'Lang zullen ze leven'¹ sung by all the guests dancing round them.

The next day they left by car and took the train to Poland, where they spent some time skiing in the Carpathians and the Tatra mountains.

Soon afterwards I also went to the mountains for a rest after our busy time. First I went to Igls with a small group, including some skiers, then on to Zell am See by car, a beautiful trip. It was a joy to walk in the snow on the lake. My window and balcony looked out on the mountain slopes, and I became absorbed in watching the descents of the skiers. Another window gave a view of the skating-rink, where young men from various countries played ice-hockey. We often let our meal grow cold to watch their matches.

¹ The Dutch 'He is a jolly good fellow'.

My children had promised that in the course of their long honeymoon they would pay me a short visit. They did not forget, and came to spend a few days with me at Zell, accompanied by a group of friends. I was back at the Huis ten Bosch long before their return; this was to be their temporary abode before they installed themselves definitely at Soestdijk.

The two of them represented me at the coronation of King George VI in May 1937.

Early one November day in 1937 I received the startling news that Bernhard had had a serious accident. He was driving in the direction of Amsterdam when suddenly and without warning a sand-lorry came out into the road. It was too late to stop and Bernhard's Ford came to a standstill halfway under the lorry. He was taken to the nearest hospital, the Burgerziekenhuis in Amsterdam, with concussion and several injuries. The news upset me all the more as Juliana was expecting her first baby in a few months.

I left for Amsterdam at once, after informing Juliana by telegram or telephone, making it sound as innocent as I could and adding that I was on my way to the hospital and would come and see her afterwards to tell her what I had found.

In the hospital I found everybody in dejection. All I heard tended to convince me of the gravity of Bernhard's condition and to prepare me for the worst. Although I was grateful to be told everything, I did not allow this to depress me, and even felt somewhat annoyed by it. I believed firmly that Bernhard would be preserved for Juliana.

Bernhard recognized me for a moment. He was only half conscious and suffered much pain.

After this short visit I went to Soestdijk and made a report to Juliana in the most careful terms. As a result of a consultation between her doctor and the doctors of the hospital, she received permission to visit her husband and to go and stay at the hospital. I went with her, and she was admitted to the patient the same evening. When we arrived a small crowd was waiting outside the hospital, their faces expressing anxious concern. They interpreted our coming as a sign

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that Bernhard's end was near, although in fact Juliana was only admitted because his condition had not deteriorated and even the pessimistic doctors gave him a chance of pulling through.

We were hospitably received and given a bedroom and a small sitting-room, which soon filled up with expressions of sympathy that left hardly a place for us to sit. In spite of our worries we had to laugh; these rooms were also the offices of the Head of State.

Although the weather was cold, we took a walk every day, usually in the Zoo. We attended the nurses' Christmas party and I decorated a little tree for my children. Who could have foreseen that they would spend their first Christmas away from home in these circumstances?

Bernhard's condition improved satisfactorily. He came home before Beatrix's birth, but many months passed before he had overcome all the effects of the accident. Needless to say, we were full of gratitude towards the doctors and nurses of the hospital.

On the 31st of January 1938 we had the joy of Beatrix's arrival. Partly because of the accident, the christening was postponed until the summer. Her mother presented her at the font herself.

On our way to the winter sports or to our summer holiday resort in France or Switzerland we sometimes interrupted our journey in towns where we wanted to look at museums and see the countryside or meet relatives. One of our regular stopping-places was Bâle, where we always had a meal in the station restaurant. On such occasions our consul used to meet us on the platform.

I remember clearly how he met us there in the winter of 1933. Hindenburg had just appointed Hitler chancellor, and the consul was the first to inform me of this important event. I was very upset. What was going to happen *now*? Old President Hindenburg was still at the helm, but Mussolini had shown us how quickly fascist forces can remove lawful authority. I did not doubt that Hitler would soon establish a dictatorship. I continued my journey full of anxiety for the future. What would be Germany's foreign policy?

My gloomy forebodings were soon proved justified. We witnessed the arrangements and rearrangements that gave Hitler unlimited power in Germany. The country withdrew from the international community. Poor Dolfuss, prime minister of a friendly country, was horribly murdered by Austrian national-socialists. The news of this crime confirmed me in my view that no good was to be expected of Hitler and that he would not hesitate to use any means that could serve his policies.

The reader will understand that, apart from giving my full attention to these events, I also tried to see more clearly than the public and the newspapers what they would lead to. The main question was what national-socialism would mean for the rest of Europe. By the spring of 1938, when Hitler invaded Austria, the answer was plain to me. German policy would result in a European catastrophe.

No sooner had Hitler got hold of Austria than he began to stir up trouble in Czechoslovakia. He wanted the regions inhabited by the Sudeten-Germans to be ceded to Germany. This demand created strong tension in Europe, but the conflict did not yet come to a head this time. A conference of British, French, Italian and German statesmen at Munich averted the danger, but only for a short time. Hitler's land-hunger had not been appeased.

It had already become obvious to me that Hitler would go further, that for him the attainment of one object only meant that he could start working on the realization of his next territorial wish, and that he would involve the whole of Europe in his game as soon as he considered the time ripe for it. The prelude to the treacherous attack on our own country had begun.

To me the only difference between the situation in 1938, indeed from 1934, and that in May 1940 was that Hitler's troops had not yet invaded our country. The war, for me, lasted ten years instead of five, and I shall discuss the period in that light.

The long uncertainty as to when the war would begin was terribly oppressive for us. What a burden it was to live in the knowledge that we were heading for a catastrophe, and to be gradually enveloped by the dark shadows of the future.

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In the spring of 1939 Hitler occupied Bohemia and Moravia, and proceeded to claim Danzig and to submit demands to Poland. The Poles, supported by British and French guarantees, rejected them. On my birthday, the 31st of August 1939, we heard that Hitler's invasion of Poland was imminent. It started the following morning, and was succeeded within two days by the British and French declarations of war. I was in The Hague on my birthday and held my usual reception of high officials as quietly as possible. I did not cancel it, as it seemed a good opportunity to have a word with them all. Only at that moment did many people in Holland recognize the danger that threatened them. They had been quietly asleep on the pillow called neutrality, in a complacency which unfortunately also affected many of those in responsible positions. Shortly before the war it was necessary for me to point out that Hitler had written a book, and that it might be of some interest to examine its contents!

After the reception I passed a few hours at Soestdijk, where my children and grandchildren were awaiting me. Grandchildren, for Irene had been born on the 5th of August. She made her first journey a few weeks later, when our mobilization had been proclaimed and her parents took Trix and her to The Hague to await further developments with me. It was a complete repetition of 1914 when the First World War started; once again we had fine summer weather and spent much of our time in the garden at the Noordeinde.

6. *The Second World War*

IMMEDIATELY after the outbreak of hostilities we issued the usual declaration of neutrality. How long was it going to be respected?

They were anxious days, which passed slowly and became weeks and months. How long would the luckless Poles be able to resist? Reports of the advance of Hitler's armies in the east succeeded each other with frightening rapidity. When would Hitler turn against the west?

Lieutenant-Colonel Phaff, my A.D.C., served as liaison officer with the C.-in-C.'s headquarters and reported to me every day. From the first the news was far from reassuring. Also an increasing number of unpleasant incidents occurred in this country, caused by the nazis or their Dutch accomplices, the members of the N.S.B. All this spelt evil for the future.

In Belgium, which was just as much threatened as we were, there still lived a faint hope that the danger might be averted. Leopold and Spaak, his Foreign Minister, came to consult with me and Van Kleffens about the possibility of a combined attempt at mediation. After due deliberation this was undertaken, but without the slightest success. Our good intentions only annoyed our future allies.

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Then suddenly we heard that the Finnish people had been attacked by the Russians and we had the spectacle of a small people's heroic resistance against vastly superior forces.

I remember a gloomy Christmas: the burden of approaching doom, the many families who were without husband or son, waiting for the fate that was in store for them when the enemy crossed our frontier.

Then came a long severe winter, which turned our water defences into masses of strong ice that would be only too easy for the enemy to cross.

Between September 1939 and May 1940 my children returned several times to Soestdijk, but never for more than a few days. The last time they were fully aware that it might be very long before they saw their recently furnished home again, and they took all the measures that a prolonged absence necessitates. Although they tried not to show it, I could see when they returned to the Huis ten Bosch, where I had gone to live in the spring, how much it had cost them. It was the same for me: everywhere I went I wondered: 'When shall I ever see this again?' And the Huis ten Bosch had become so dear to me, with its garden in the splendour of spring, with its carpet of anemones and fritillaries and other wild flowers. In the midst of all this my grandchildren were playing, without a care in the world. It was one of the sunniest and mildest springs I can remember.

In April came the distressing news of the surprise attack on Denmark and the invasion of Norway, whose mountain ranges and fiords that penetrated deeply into the country were not enough to deter the conqueror. Within an incredibly short time Hitler's men had established their control up to the northernmost tip of the country.

Juliana's birthday arrived. We tried to be brave and not to lose heart. She made a drive through the town with her husband and children, in beautiful summer weather. I watched them as they left . . . I was assailed by many emotions.

In May all the reports pointed to an attack within a few days. Rationally I had to admit this, and yet like so many others I still clung to a last hope that something entirely

unforeseen might happen which would prevent the worst. But it did not happen!

On the 9th of May, Phaff insisted that we should spend the night in the air-raid shelter. At four o'clock in the morning the enemy crossed our frontier. I addressed myself to the nation with the following proclamation:

My People,

After all these months during which our country has scrupulously observed a strict neutrality, and while its only intention was to maintain this attitude firmly and consistently, a surprise attack without the slightest warning was launched on our territory by the German armed forces last night. This in spite of a solemn guarantee that our neutrality would be respected as long as we maintained it ourselves.

I hereby raise a fierce protest against this unexampled violation of good faith and outrage upon all that is proper between civilized states.

I and my government will continue to do our duty. You will do yours, everywhere and in all circumstances, each in the place he occupies, with the utmost vigilance and the inner peace and devotion which a clear conscience affords.

A few hours after the invasion it was reported to me that the palace guard had shot down an enemy aircraft, which had crashed in the neighbouring park. That morning German paratroops dropped over The Hague in large numbers.

A request reached me from military quarters to leave the Huis ten Bosch and take up our residence in town, where our personal safety would be better assured. We arrived at the Noordeinde after an adventurous journey; confusion everywhere, crowds and traffic jams and bewildered soldiers, who after their first experience of battle with the enemy paratroopers were hardly able to distinguish between friend and foe.

For reasons of safety we spent the next few days in and around the little shelter in the garden. We had all the usual experiences of war, which were completely new to me at the time. I was very much disappointed not to be allowed to go about in town and only half believed the stories about skirmishes taking place in many streets. I regretted particularly my inability to visit and speak to the wounded in the hospitals.

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Contact with the ministers was also virtually excluded; they too had to live in shelters.

After overcoming many objections my son-in-law managed to produce a practicable plan to convey his wife and children to safer quarters. A sufficient number of paratroops had been rounded up to make transport possible on certain roads and at Ymuiden there were British destroyers which were willing to take Juliana and the children to England. It was an audacious undertaking for these ships, for they could have no air protection against the enemy. They left on Sunday. I had some difficulty in persuading Bernhard to accompany them; he would have preferred to stay and fight, but I considered his enterprise and resourcefulness indispensable on the journey. To my relief I received news of their safe arrival in London the next day. Only afterwards I heard that an enemy aircraft had dropped a bomb within yards of the destroyer as it left Ymuiden harbour.

I imagined that I should be able to remain at my post in The Hague for some time at least and that if the worst came to the worst I should accompany the army southward, as King Albert of Belgium had done in his day. I knew that Bernhard would return at once and continue fighting by my side. How differently it all worked out!

The reports I received from headquarters implied that our troops had the worst of the battle in the air as well as on land, because they faced superior forces of tanks and aircraft. We had but few tanks at our disposal and the air force was too small to resist very long. I was kept informed day and night.

From my shelter I could *hear* the war approaching, as it were. With the consent of the Commander-in-Chief I rang up the King of England one night and asked him for assistance. The English had already sent a few reinforcements, but these were nowhere near enough.

In the early morning of the 13th of May the Commander-in-Chief advised me to leave The Hague. An enemy tank column would have reached Rotterdam within a few hours and no assurances could be given as to subsequent developments. He also suggested that I should go to Flushing or

Zealand Flanders, where the military situation seemed slightly less unfavourable. Hurriedly I packed a few belongings and I left The Hague that morning at half past nine, preceded by a car with police troops. I took with me the A.D.C.s on duty and the orderly and also as my companion Miss Van Rijn van Alkemade. I was further accompanied by the vice-president of the Council of State, Jonkheer Beelaerts van Blokland, and the director of the Queen's Secretariat, Jonkheer Van Tets; and I invited Mr Van 't Sant to join us—he had been in charge of my security after the head of our security service had left with Juliana and the children. So we all departed, after a difficult moment when we said good-bye to those we left behind.

Our first goal was the Hook of Holland, but according to our latest information not all the paratroopers had been rounded up in the area through which we had to travel. It had been reported that they were often disguised as members of the population, and we frequently heard a challenge to halt from the police car in front of us. Occasionally, when it was not immediately obeyed, a shot was fired.

A few bombs were dropped when we arrived at the Hook. We found a British destroyer ready to sail, but we still wanted a pilot who could guide us through the mine-fields. The naval commander at the Hook found us Lieutenant-Colonel Logger of the Marines Reserve, who knew the course to steer. We embarked, and the destroyer left at once. A few officers who were sent to England by the Ministry of War joined my party.

Our destination should have been Flushing or Breskens, in Zealand Flanders; but when the English commander was consulted about the best way to make contact with our commanding rear-admiral in Zealand he told us that his instructions did not allow him to make contact with anybody on shore. This was very disappointing news, for it practically meant the end of our plan to go to Zealand. It would have been completely irresponsible to arrive there without previously notifying the rear-admiral, who would have been responsible for the conduct of the war as well as my personal security; and we knew nothing of the military situation in

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Zealand. What could we do? By this time we were in open sea, there could be no question of going back. After consultation with those whose opinion should be heard—a miniature war council in life-jackets—I decided to go to England. This was allowed by the commander's instructions. From there I thought it would be possible to renew contact with Holland, and then to decide when I could return and where I should go. Moreover, it would also be possible once more to ask for military assistance.

Of course I was fully aware of the shattering impression that my departure would make at home, but I considered myself obliged, for the sake of the country, to accept the risk of appearing to have resorted to ignominious flight.

If the guerilla against the parachute troops had not cut off all connections with the army fighting on the Grebbe, I could have joined it to share the fate of the soldier and, as William III put it, to be the last man to fall in the last ditch. I knew that this was not granted to me either.

How different the development of the war was from what we had imagined! A return to the Netherlands became impossible. General Winkelman soon capitulated, as he was empowered to do when further fighting would have meant useless bloodshed.

The destroyer disembarked me and my party at Harwich, where I intended to stay in expectation of my return. The British authorities, however, had already provided a train to take me to London, so I left. At the station I was met by King George and by my children, who were very upset and did not understand that I should have had to follow them so soon. The King asked me to be the guest of himself and the Queen, and escorted me to Buckingham Palace. Bernhard returned immediately to the scene of the fighting in our country and then went on to France. A few days later Haakon and Olav of Norway arrived. Like ourselves, Norway had to give up resistance on her own soil and to continue it at the side of the Allies.

As soon as Hitler's treacherous attack had started, the ministers Van Kleffens (Foreign Affairs) and Welter (Colonies)

had gone to England in order to make contact with our allies. I found them there when I arrived. The other ministers came the day after.

After my arrival in London our proclamation was issued:

When it had become absolutely certain that we and our ministers in the Netherlands could no longer continue to exercise our authority freely, the difficult but inevitable decision had to be taken to transfer the seat of government to a foreign country, for as long a period as will be necessary and with the intention to return to the Netherlands at the first opportunity. The government is now in England. It wishes to avoid a governmental capitulation. Thus all of the Netherlands territory that is still in our hands, in Europe and in the East and West Indies, continues as one sovereign state to make its voice heard in the community of states and particularly in the consultations of the combined allies. The military authority, and in the last resort the Commander-in-Chief, now takes all the measures that are necessary and justified from the military point of view.

The civilian authorities in occupied territory should continue doing everything that can serve the interest of the population and in the first place should help to maintain peace and order.

Our heart goes out to our fellow-countrymen at home, who will live through difficult times. But in the end the Netherlands will recover its entire European territory with God's help. Remember the disasters of former centuries which the country overcame, and do all you can in the best interests of the nation, as we shall on our part. Long live the Fatherland!

The reports on the fighting in Belgium and France grew steadily worse. King Leopold had capitulated with his army, the British retreat across the Channel had begun, the fall of Paris was a matter of days. What were Hitler's intentions now? Would he penetrate further into France in order to bring the whole of the country under his domination, or would he follow up his victories on the continent with an attack on the United Kingdom and launch an invasion with his naval and air forces? He chose the first alternative and thereby lost the war.

Gigantic preparations were made to beat off an attack on British soil, and soon Hitler's opportunity had passed. Later the Allies undertook what Hitler had not risked: large-scale

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landings, and they were the decisive factor in the Allied victory.

As a consequence of the occupation of France the enemy was all too close to us in the United Kingdom and heavy air-raids were to be expected; it was therefore necessary that Juliana and her children should be taken to a country that was further removed from the theatre of war. In choosing her place of residence we were not only guided by thoughts for her safety. Juliana should establish herself in the country of one of our allies, for only there could she be sure that in the case of my death she would be allowed to exercise her royal powers as in the Netherlands. In a neutral country this would not have been quite certain. This was part of the reason for our choice of Canada. While the necessary arrangements were being made, she stayed at Lydney Park, which seemed safer than London.

Irene's christening, which her parents had postponed till the spring, was to have taken place in Amsterdam in May. In response to a kind offer from the King and Queen of England it was now arranged in the chapel of Buckingham Palace. The service was conducted by the British court chaplain, together with the Pastor Van Dorp of the Dutch Reformed Church in London, who performed the christening: Irene Emma Elisabeth. Her godparents were Queen Elizabeth and our armed forces.

On the 2nd of June Juliana and her children and Mrs Röell with her daughter embarked on the *Sumatra* which then left for Halifax, escorted by the *Jacob van Heemskerck*. Of course this departure was kept strictly secret. Bernhard, who had returned from France, took Juliana to the ship. I gazed after the car as it drove off from Lydney Park—when and where would we meet again? Bernhard returned late in the evening, very unhappy at the prospect of their long separation. Several weeks passed before Juliana's first letter brought a ray of light for him and myself.

A fortunate circumstance was that Juliana's arrival in Canada nearly coincided with that of our cousin Lord Athlone and our niece Princess Alice. Lord Athlone had just been appointed Governor-General of Canada.

Juliana was hospitably received by the Canadian government, which put at her disposal lodgings in the Seignior Club at Monte Bello, in the forest on the Ottawa river, which she was to occupy until the coming of the new Governor-General. When Lord Athlone and Princess Alice had arrived in Ottawa, Juliana went to stay with them at Government House, until a house had been found for her in Rockcliffe Park, just outside the town.

She saw it as her first duty to extend her care and kindness to the Dutch people living in and around Ottawa. She had to decide independently on her actions, as of course contact with London was very limited. Only once every three weeks could we have a telephone conversation, which had to be so short that very little could be said; apart from that we depended on our correspondence. Thanks to Lord Athlone's kindness, our letters were included in the Governor-General's bag, instead of having to be sent by ordinary mail. I shall revert to the subject of Juliana's activities later. For the moment I only want to say that the Canadian government showed her true friendship as well as a sensitive understanding of the difficult and unusual situation in which she found herself.

Belgium and Luxemburg had been invaded by the German troops at the same time as the Netherlands. The Grand Duchess and her family had just been able to leave the country, thereby making it possible for the government to continue in office abroad. She too came to London.

By their decision to give up their neutrality, and join the Allies, the Grand Duchess and her government rendered a signal service to their people.

When all hope of an immediate return had been abandoned, a solution had to be found for the housing problems of our government services and of myself. Bernhard and I installed ourselves in Eaton Square, in a big dark house which offered sufficient room for my whole entourage. I spent much time working in a formal drawing-room with dark-blue upholstery and old family portraits; adjoining it was a balcony with a view of the Square and its tall old trees. Working there, one

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had the illusion of being in the country, and very soon I began to long for a place out of town. I went house-hunting by car, and found what I wanted at Roehampton, next to Richmond Park. It was a little cottage with a garden. There was just room enough for me and my companion and for Bernhard when he came to see me.

After the blackout had been installed I moved in. It was the ideal spot for me, with the park so near and yet within easy distance of London. It was here that I met the first *Engelandvaarder*,¹ heard the first broadcast of Radio Oranje (the British government had put broadcasting time at our disposal), and received the first letters from Juliana. And it was here that I accustomed myself to my exile.

Before I continue the description of my experiences, I should like to make a few general remarks about my years in London. In accordance with my view of the position of the Crown in our constitution, I shall limit myself as strictly as possible to my personal ideas in respect of the Netherlands. This seems the more logical as several accounts of the period have already appeared.

My personal ideas were formed on the basis of reports by people who had come from the fatherland, of the underground Press and of written information in other forms which reached me in different ways. Together these provided the link between the Netherlands and myself in the difficult years and made it a living personal contact.

One's experiences in such times defy description. I shall not attempt the impossible.

Before anything else it was necessary to keep one's head cool in spite of all the dreadful tidings, which succeeded each other so rapidly that there was no time to overcome the shock of the first before the next one arrived. Iron self-control was required all day long. One's fitness for taking objective decisions would soon have been lost if one had given rein to emotions and human pity. A constant readiness for action and a clear objective vision were needed.

¹ Translator's note: the untranslatable Dutch word for a person who escaped from occupied territory and came to Britain (=England farer).

I considered it my first duty as far as possible to respond to wishes expressed at home and to speak and act in the spirit of the Netherlands. In my opinion the policy of the government had to remain anchored in the Netherlands, whose mandate it held. For this reason it was particularly important for me to be well informed of the feelings and ideas that existed at home. After a time I began to receive reports which had special value for me, concerning preparations made in various fields for reforms after the liberation. The authors expressed themselves freely, which meant that we received a clear impression of the background behind their ideas, which had often already assumed a definite shape.

When I arrived in London I found acute dismay among our countrymen about the treacherous attack on our country and great concern for all those at home. In the long run, I noticed that among the Dutchmen who had not come from occupied territory mistaken ideas about the fatherland were current, concerning the present situation as well as the future. The Netherlands were shut off, but this did not affect their right to decide their own affairs. It appeared to be difficult for some people to see this clearly and to draw the right conclusions from it. As the occupation went on, the number of those who tended to act at their own discretion in various fields increased. Fortunately these cases remained exceptional and in the end all were of good will. Few were able to judge the situation correctly as it grew increasingly complicated.

To us who were cut off from the Netherlands, it was sometimes difficult to establish the separating line between matters that had to be decided in London and those on which a decision could be postponed until the nation could once again control its own destiny—on which decisions in London would be premature. This demanded foresight and a clear understanding of the issues involved, whether it was a matter of politics or business or anything else. There were cases when it would have been fatal not to act; in other cases action would have restricted the nation's freedom of action unnecessarily.

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Very soon I was busily occupied in London. My work was different from what it used to be. It was imperative that my information about the constantly changing military and political situation and the position of the Netherlands in the general picture should remain up to date. In a wider sense, my whole life had changed now that I found myself near the centre of world politics.

My anxiety about the fatherland increased day by day. Who, in 1940, could have suspected that this anxiety would last so long and grow to such dimensions, become so oppressive? These five years were a test to which we were all subjected, at home and in London. If it had not been a test, the misery and the nightmares about the future would have been simply impossible to bear.

The task of governing in a narrower sense, which had diminished at first, soon grew larger. Provisions of all kinds had to be made, and the contacts with our allies and the maintenance of friendly relations required attention, care and time. For me this meant primarily keeping up and strengthening friendly relations with the various heads of state.

Busy though we were, my life in London was not dominated by action but by endless waiting; by the expectation of the day when the people of the Netherlands, delivered from the power of the enemy, would resume control of their own destiny. As I felt it, the sense of my existence was that I should live to see that day, to pull the handle that would set the normal machine of the Dutch state going once again.

Needless to say, this life of expectation, of keeping ready year after year, was not an easy one. Moreover, I was not told any military secrets and therefore could follow the development towards the great day only from a distance.

For those who might be surprised by this, I should add that from a military point of view it was only natural that plans for operations should be kept strictly secret. This secrecy was of course an indispensable condition for their success.

Like many people at home, I remained an optimist all through the war, because everything was too terrible to be



British Official Photograph, London

Queen Wilhelmina crossing the Dutch frontier near Aardenburg,
March 1945

Queen Wilhelmina appeals to the Limburg miners, March 1945

Rijksvoorlichtingsdienst, The Hague





New York T

Winston Churchill visiting the Netherlands, May 1946

Visit to King George VI, July 1946

Keystone Press, Lo



permanent. I knew myself to be at one with all at home in my confidence in the invisible and occasionally unrecognizable Guidance whose hand controls the destiny of nations, out of the reach of even the most unscrupulous conqueror. My optimism also sprang from my view of our national character. I knew that the disasters would evoke splendid qualities: love of freedom, constancy, courage, indomitability. I knew that the will to remain ourselves would assert itself without a moment's weakness, and that our people would sacrifice everything to this purpose.

Our history shows that we have always regained our freedom after a short time. I had been convinced from childhood that an oppressor would find the Netherlands nothing but a source of trouble and that sooner or later he would have to give them back their liberty.

In the talks about history with Mother this important point had often been discussed and we had completely agreed about it. Who could have thought that this psychological insight would one day become the mainstay of my confidence in the future, in the midst of adversity and disasters?

My conviction that it was necessary for me to keep my head cool in all circumstances led me to maintain a calm and unmoved exterior, but behind this in the meantime my inner reactions to the events assailed my faith. It was a formidable trial of strength, which lasted throughout the war. My will to hold on to my faith and to persist grew stronger in the face of all the ordeals. I clung to it as a shipwrecked man clings to a rock with his remaining strength.

Never did I allow myself to imagine the fatal development that might ensue if doubt or unbelief should creep into my heart. Praise and thanks be to Him who saved me from this, the worst thing that could befall a human being.

Never will faith expect too much,
The Saviour's words have told us this.
Though earthly friends may forces lack,
Not such a One as Jesus is.

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At first one did not notice the war much; there were only the air-raid warnings from time to time and the A.A. guns coming into action. But this state of relative comfort did not last long.

Bernhard, who had returned to England after the Battle of France, gradually won the confidence of the Allies through his ability to make his knowledge in various fields useful to the war effort. It was not long before the King appointed him liaison officer between his headquarters and our armed forces. He did his work, which brought him into close contact with our armed forces, tactfully and enterprisingly. In the course of the years he visited many units and bases of the Allied naval, air and land forces. On several occasions he was invited to visit distant fronts by aeroplane. To our *Engelandvaarders* and to all our young fighters he became a friend who was always ready to help them and defend their interests.

The air force attracted him particularly and he asked to be trained as a pilot. He obtained his first pilot's licence at Hatfield. Adventure and bravery held such appeal for him that it was difficult to stop him from taking part in raids over Germany; in fact, I could not guarantee that he never did.

His life was not an easy one either. The separation from his wife and children depressed him, and so did the impossibility to communicate with his mother. Moreover, he found it difficult to get used to the idea that he had to stay behind while so many of his friends were at the front. His job seemed to him less important than that of the fighting soldiers.

All this made me decide to return to Eaton Square, where he lived. This was about the middle of August.

The Battle of Britain was beginning. It happened more and more often that a servant reminded me that I had to leave my balcony when the sirens were sounding, and every time I had to take all my papers back into the dark room. At other times there was an air-raid warning while I was walking in Hyde Park, and we had to take refuge in the shelter. In the end we referred to this walk as 'musical chairs'. It was no longer worth while to go and walk in the park, all we could do was to circle round the shelter.

The basement at Eaton Square was converted into an

air-raid shelter. While the work was going on we went to Claridge's every day before supper with a little suitcase, to spend the night in the large shelter there with many others, and to return home after breakfast.

In September the air-raids increased in intensity. Supper was early, at half past six, and then one took one's work to the shelter and stayed there until the morning. Daily life changed completely. The Londoner's habit of doing business during meals, at luncheon or at dinner, had to be given up. Business dinners were the first to go; luncheons followed. Many people left town at night in their cars and spent the night in them.

When the air-raids became more frequent Bernhard and I decided to move out of London to a quieter place. We installed ourselves at Stubbings, a country-house near Maidenhead, an hour from London by car. I thought it would be better for my work; the disturbed nights in the basement, the unusual division of the day and the constant risk of shock during an air-raid made it advisable to leave London if I wanted to have calm for my decisions. We went regularly to town by car. From Stubbings we could see the bombing in the distance.

From one of the main roads a lane leads to Stubbings through a thicket. The house itself is a rectangular shape with a large terrace in front, surrounded by a park-like garden. On one side of the house there was a fair-sized nursery garden with some fruit trees; a wall separated it from the lawn which stretched out along the back of the house—the lawn on which the British spend nearly all their free time in summer. On the lawn there were a few single trees and several clumps of trees.

On the other side of the house, separated from the lawn and the road by shrubs, there was a private corner of the owner of Stubbings: a small meadow, which became a sea of wild narcissi for several weeks in spring. I often went to look at these friends and altogether spent many hours with them, wrapped in thought.

It was not only through its resemblance to the fatherland that this spot held such meaning for me; it was also the

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message conveyed by the narcissi. In their defenceless tenderness and their radiant whiteness they showed themselves unaware of the world of brute force and destruction around them. They faced me as messengers from the other world where the God-given values were a living reality; the values we preserved so scrupulously at home and were in that very moment defending with blood and tears. That was their significance: the values that seemed threatened were resting in God's hand as securely as the splendour of spring at my feet.

Writing this down, I remember the scene as a volume of unwritten resistance poetry.

The house in Eaton Square was taken over by the government for our *Engelandvaarders* and we moved to Chester Square, just round the corner, where both Bernhard and I had our studies and our staff including Mr Van 't Sant had their offices.

It was at Stubbings that I conferred the first Military Order of William on Mr Schaper. At that time I was the only one qualified to give the accolade, as Grand Master of the Dutch Orders; but afterwards there were other knights of the order who could also perform this significant act.

Shortly after our move to Stubbings the British proposed to the Allied heads of state that they should have a guard composed of members of their own armed forces. As a rule of course the soldiers of the Allies were incorporated in the combined forces, and any departure from the rule required a special provision.

A detachment of military police was put at my disposal, which acted as a guard first at Stubbings and then at my new residence. Apart from their guard duties, which included air-raid precautions, they also performed other services which required people who were absolutely trustworthy. In short, they were a welcome and indispensable reinforcement of the Dutch element in my immediate surroundings, which was very useful to me. When I lived at Stubbings, they had their quarters in the thicket, which provided good camouflage

against reconnaissance from the air. Religious services were held for them in their mess, usually by Dutch army chaplains. I attended the Protestant service regularly.

I had derived great satisfaction and joy from the expressions of sympathy with the Netherlands which had reached us when the news of the attack on our country had spread. These tokens of sympathy came from Dutchmen in all parts of the world as well as from all kinds of members of the populations of the Netherlands' overseas empire and from foreigners. We received many offers of voluntary service from South Africa; some of the volunteers were already preparing the way by selling their farms.

Various funds were opened which collected large voluntary contributions from Dutchmen to support the war effort. I also received many private expressions of warm sympathy, often accompanied by a present consisting of an object particularly dear to the donor.

I want to recall particularly the greetings from the fatherland in the form of presents brought by the *Engelandvaarders* on their hazardous journey. I also received letters from people in occupied territory, who tried to give me news, sometimes in codes that took a great deal of deciphering. Much as I appreciated these letters, they always made me worry on account of the risk their authors ran.

During the first few months we were completely cut off from the Netherlands. Then news began to filter through, slowly at first but with increasing regularity. For a long time it was impossible to obtain a clear picture of what went on; this became possible only when the reports received began to cover all fields of activity at home, and when they began to live through what we heard directly from the *Engelandvaarders* about their resistance groups and about life in general in their part of the country.

I was always very keen to meet the *Engelandvaarders*, and every attempt was made to arrange that they should come to me immediately after their admission into the United Kingdom, to give me their impressions of the situation while

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these were still fresh. I let them tell me at length about their experiences, about all they had done and had been through, and I followed their lives in London with active interest. They represented to me not only a real and vital part of the Netherlands, but also the true spirit of the resistance movement. From the moment when the first of them arrived, keeping in contact with them was a very important special task for me, to which I gave myself with heart and soul.

The majority of them had come to join the armed forces, the women as well as the men. All of these without exception told me that they had decided to escape only when it had become clear that they could no longer take part in the underground fighting. It was difficult for them to have patience until they had found their place—not always as quickly as they would have wished. Another problem for some of them was to get used to the aspect of the war in England, which was not at all what they had imagined. During the first years one did not notice the war much in London and other towns, apart from the Battle of Britain. Activity was concentrated in the factories, where everybody took part in the manufacture of munitions, etc. Only the bombing was there to remind us of the war.

The Dutchmen who had collected in and around London formed something like a large village community, where each knew everything about everyone else. It consisted of all those who had come to Britain from Holland or other countries, added to the Dutch colony in London. Dutchmen from other parts of Britain and from America, Canada and Australia were immediately received into this community when they came to spend some time in London.

For all those who were there during the war, efforts were made by the government and by private individuals to find housing and social amenities and help. When their numbers were augmented these modest efforts proved insufficient, and the need was felt for a Dutch centre, where Dutch people would feel at home and could obtain information on all subjects. Such a centre would also be useful to me, as it would facilitate my contacts with them.

A combined effort to find suitable premises was rewarded with success. On the 2nd of June 1942 I had the pleasure of opening the centre in the presence of a few authorities and many future visitors. It was a solemn moment when in the course of the ceremony our national flag was hoisted and received its first salute.

This occasion was the first time when I wore the marguerite. The origin of this idea was as follows: As the news from home became more and more depressing, I grew increasingly aware of the painful contrast between our life in liberty and that of our countrymen, who were subjected to all sorts of suffering in mind and body. In the end I felt that we as Dutchmen should in some visible way distinguish ourselves from the British, by wearing a badge that pointed to the suffering at home.

This should not be a symbol suggestive only of mourning in our hearts, expressing nothing but despair in the face of so much undeserved misery. It should convey the flame of hope that burned in all our hearts, in England and at home, the certainty that a new dawn of liberty would break. I looked round for a symbol of our anxiety that would point out at the same time that we saw light between the clouds over the fatherland. I felt that it would have to be of an immaculate white, an expression of sorrow and hope, and an object within everyone's reach. Then suddenly I found it. I remembered the park of my beloved home with its fields of white marguerites, which I had always seen turning their faces towards the sun, and I knew at once: the marguerite, that typically Dutch flower, shall be our emblem, which shall speak of our identification with the grief at home and our belief in the nation's resurrection.

So on the day when I opened the home for our fighters—the inmates decided to call it *Oranjehaven*, Orange Harbour—I wore the marguerite for the first time. It was one with a white heart. I proposed that we should all adopt it as a sign of our Dutch nationality and of our spirit of resistance. Very soon my initiative had been followed and many buttonholes displayed the marguerite. The only difference was that the flower was worn as we see it in nature, with a golden heart.

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As this idea had originated with the *Engelandvaarders*, I accepted it whole-heartedly.

Not long after I and the government had arrived in England, a large house was put at our disposal as an expression of Anglo-Dutch friendship, the initiative coming from Sir Neville Bland, the British ambassador to our government. It was meant to serve as a meeting-place for the British and the Dutch, and was known as Netherlands House. British and Dutch people frequently met there for meals, but there was a great deal of space left on the upper floors, which was put to good use by the Dutch school (conducted by Mrs Marsman, the widow of the poet) and by the organizers of social meetings, musical evenings and lectures. The latter I myself also attended, and later it was here that I used to get together with students and that I received sixty Dutch artists living in London.

On the initiative of Mr Posthumus Meyjes, who acted as chairman, discussions were held in Netherlands House between *Engelandvaarders* and Dutchmen living in London. These meetings which were regularly attended by my son-in-law and myself did much to create and increase mutual understanding.

A wide variety of subjects was brought up and often inspired lively debates. One of these subjects was the political future of the Netherlands and their place in the new Europe, which had been discussed in a pamphlet by E. Michielsen, a young *Engelandvaarder*, who stated and defended his views with considerable skill (to our great regret he died soon afterwards in an air crash). The more mature among the young *Engelandvaarders* showed great interest in these matters. I was informed that the same subjects were being discussed in small resistance groups in Holland. The desire for reform which was expressed at all these gatherings was not in itself a new phenomenon. It had originated in the 'thirties; what was new was that the interest in reforms was now general. In the midst of the war people were longing not only for the liberation, but also for a new era. Liberation should not mean a return to the old conditions.

I received further proof of the interest in these matters

among the *Engelandvaarders* when they came to see me in my office and explained at length how they themselves and those who had remained behind saw the future. I also heard of the criticisms that had been levelled in Holland against Boisot's book on *The Rebirth of the Kingdom*, which had a stimulating influence on the discussions, whatever one may think of the author's views. Much of what occupied people's minds during those years has been realized since, in the Netherlands and elsewhere in Europe.

Out of a considerable number of university students who had come to Britain, I invited those who were available to a conference, where they told me what ideas for the future were current in the student world and gave me all the information about the students' resistance movement.

When we tried to visualize how everything would work when the Allied victory had been achieved, and the fatherland had regained its liberty, nobody could form a very clear picture. The cabinet and I agreed, however, that a plan had to be prepared and that problems which were likely to present themselves had to be traced and considered, little though our reliable data might be.

In this case my task was to form my own judgment of the ideas put forward by the government services.

As I said before, during the first few months we had no contact with the Netherlands. When this changed and when I began to receive reports I became convinced of the necessity to propose a new direction for post-war policies to the peoples of the empire, in the Netherlands and overseas. This direction should follow the wishes expressed in the Netherlands and in the east and west at the time of the liberation.

I recognized the revolution of ideas and its accompanying pressure for reforms in many fields, and I considered it desirable to show our understanding and to assume our part in this development.

I remember the far-ranging conversations I had about these matters with Prime Minister Gerbrandy. In the course of them I announced my wish to introduce the idea of reform

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to the Dutch people and the peoples of the Netherlands overseas myself. Of course ample scope would be left for ministerial declarations.

We agreed that as long as no other ways were open I should do this over the radio. The Council of Ministers gave its assent to our suggestion and it was agreed with Mr Gerbrandy that he would read the drafts of my speeches and discuss them with me. I owe a debt of gratitude to the cabinet for its far-seeing statesmanship and its courage in assuming this responsibility. This made it possible to point out a light on the horizon to our compatriots who were carrying such a heavy burden. Their eyes could be directed towards a time when they would once again decide freely on their future. In my view the exceptional circumstances made it fully justifiable that the government in London should assume responsibility for announcements concerning a period when it would no longer be in office. It had been recognized from the start that after the occupation a government should be formed whose members had lived through the war years in Holland and were therefore fully acquainted with the new conditions and the wishes of the people.

Of course I never made concrete proposals in my broadcast speeches; the whole idea of them was to provide a *preparation*, while we were waiting for the time when all could express their views freely.

My first speech which contained references to these matters was broadcast after my sixtieth birthday, which had turned into a manifestation of the unity of the Netherlands and their unshakable will to win.

Thus this celebration has developed into an overwhelming demonstration for the restoration of the Netherlands' independence and for the reunification in undisturbed freedom of our community of seventy million subjects under the Dutch flag. This is an historical event of lasting significance.

All those who took part in this spontaneous expression of national independence have lent great support to our fellow-countrymen in the occupied fatherland and will have strengthened their confidence in the future.

I thank all of you in the name of those at home, who have to keep silent, for your impressive national demonstration, to which I join my voice fervently and whole-heartedly.

A nation which has vitality and determination cannot be conquered simply by force of arms. The device of my beloved mother, 'the palm flourishes under oppression', is now being applied; our national pulse beats more strongly and resolutely than ever before. It is as a single and united people that we endure our trial.

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Magnificent manifestations of unity and independence, combined with tokens of patriotic liberality and enterprise, cannot fail to raise us above the problems and cares of the moment and help us to feel confidence in a future which will render to us all a free and independent country under God's blessing. In a country with restricted freedom there is no place for the house of Orange.

Once our liberty has been regained, the task of reconstruction awaits us. This will not be easy, for it will not be simply a matter of restoration after an old model. A clear awareness of the weaknesses which had developed in our national edifice over the years will have to be combined with the understanding and the courage that are needed to effect the necessary changes. I see here an opportunity particularly for the young, who on the soil of our glorious past will have to erect an edifice in accordance with our tradition of freedom and the character of our people, which owes its civilization to Christianity.

In my speech of the 20th of March 1941 I continued along the lines set out in that of the 12th of September 1940, and said:

Convinced that your thoughts, like mine, are not standing still but go out to the near future, I want to indicate in broad detail how I imagine that the best use can be made of the time that will have to pass before you will be free again, to prepare for the future.

First of all I want to point out that the future will have to be built in consultation and co-operation with a free people, which will only then feel able to form an unprejudiced judgment.

To you who are oppressed by the conqueror who is robbing you of your freedoms, I need not explain how your ideas and vision are necessarily restricted, which means that you are still hampered in the formation of your judgment. The long and grievous separation which has cut me off from the indispensable contact with you makes it imperative that upon my return home I should first acquaint myself thoroughly with your wishes and desires.

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The time that separates us from that moment impatiently awaited by all would seem to provide an opportunity for you to give your attention to the multifarious issues that will present themselves and to prepare yourself for them.

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Fellow-countrymen,

As for the moment all our will and thought and work fuse in that single all-embracing effort towards one supreme goal: to win the struggle that will set us free again, so that same unabating effort of the whole nation will have to be directed towards the creation of our future.

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Apart from repairing the damage and the destruction and the consequences of the enemy's ruthless interference in spiritual, cultural and scientific fields, we shall have to prepare for the new era that awaits us in order to be ready and prepared to meet its demands, in the material sense as well as in others. There can be no doubt that our national organization will have to take into account the changed circumstances and the recent experiences. The first measures in this respect will have to be taken as soon as possible after the liberation. Right from the start there will be ample opportunity for free discussion of these weighty matters and for advancing suggestions and proposals and we shall have the atmosphere that we require.

I often returned to the idea of reform, always adapting myself to its development in the Netherlands. My pronouncements had to be in accordance with the feelings of the oppressed nation until the moment of the liberation.

The war inevitably imposed limitations, for the enemy was listening in. What had to be avoided at all cost was that he should learn things that might be of advantage to him and that could increase the dangers for good patriots. Henceforth I had to maintain my fitness not only to be ready when the moment came for pulling the handle, but also to respond to the wishes expressed while the war lasted.

My broadcast speeches were not only concerned with the new times. They also aimed at inspiring and stiffening resistance against the oppressor and at informing the nation of the government's policy. At the same time I did what I could to assist my countrymen in their spiritual struggle and paid homage to those who had given their lives in the great cause.

Knowing that Christmas in exile would be difficult for all, I did what I could to comfort the homesick. I organized a Dutch Christmas party at Eaton Square for our entourage, the ministers, the vice-president of the Council of State and the Director of the Queen's Secretariat, and at Stubbings gave an English party for our English servants and the English families who had been bombed out of their homes and enjoyed the hospitality of the owner of Stubbings. How different the English Christmas is from ours!

In 1940 we could still find all that is needed for Christmas in the shops. The following year there was less, and by 1944 it had become very difficult to get hold of a few candles. After our first Christmas I decided to give no more English parties and to confine our celebration to a few intimates.

Bernhard and I attended the Christmas party for the seamen in their home in London every year.

At Stubbings, on the 5th of December Saint Nicholas, was not forgotten. To the very last I managed to find sweets which according to custom were thrown into the room, although in the end I had to satisfy myself with a doubtful kind of product; and we always sang the Saint Nicholas songs we knew so well.

On such days we felt Juliana's absence more strongly than ever, and it was the same with her.

After a 1940 overshadowed by my anxiety for the Netherlands, 1941 brought no relief. One gloomy report after another reached me from the fatherland. We could clearly discern the intention on the part of the occupying power to destroy our national institutions and traditions by nazifying them and to smother in prisons and concentration camps all protest inspired by conscience.

I was also deeply concerned about the fate of our Jewish fellow-citizens, who were treated with increasing harshness by the enemy.

The new year was marked by great activity on several fronts, which yet did not open a prospect of liberation in the near future.

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The number of *Engelandvaarders* increased steadily, and also more and more people came who had been entrusted with messages from the fatherland, which enabled us to form a picture of the distressing conditions at home.

Early in March I heard from a group of them that a strike had been organized in Amsterdam shortly before, in protest against the anti-Jewish measures. Some members of the group had been there when the work was stopped.

Time, that winter, crept slowly by.

Juliana's first birthday in Canada, on the 30th of April, was a difficult day. It was to be the same in the following years.

On the 10th of May the first commemoration of the German invasion took place on the ruins of our historic church at Austin Friars, which had been destroyed by bombs down to its foundations. It was an impressive moment, although the thought of all the present and future sufferings at home was much stronger in me than the impression of what was happening around me.

The ceremony on the 10th of May was repeated in the following years, but I never attended it again, because I preferred to address those at home over the radio and commemorate this fateful day with them, even though it should be from a distance.

Then came June 22nd, the day when the Germans turned on their Russian friends and helpers, as unexpectedly as they had attacked our country. This news gave great joy to the Allies and not less to me. I remember Churchill's almost exultant speech when he welcomed the new allies. I myself said:

I want to say a few words to you on the occasion of the change in the picture of the war produced by Hitler's sudden treacherous attack on the Russian people, an attack whose sole purpose is to acquire the food supplies and raw materials that his armies need to continue their fight against justice and freedom.

Today it is Russia, but we know that tomorrow or the day after the mighty bulwarks of our civilization and of the principles that are sacred to us, the British Empire and the United States of America, will face the full impact of Hitler's war machine. For this reason we shall also

fight side by side with the people of Soviet Russia, wherever circumstances may demand it. We shall do this without denying our views of bolshevism, which are based on our principles; for we must never forget that we reject the principles and practice of bolshevism unreservedly.

Indeed our desire to be and remain ourselves, with the help of God until the furthest future, may well be stronger than ever before.

At this historic moment in the world war I feel united with all of you in our common awareness of the need to be particularly conscious of this intention.

Since last Sunday the enemy has been fighting on two fronts. Since last Sunday bombs have been raining down on his towns, his harbours and his factories from both east and west. The damage and loss inflicted upon him mean profit to us.

It should be clear to all those who follow the events attentively that it is more than ever our duty to be constantly prepared as far as it lies in our power to fight the enemy at the right moment in order to ensure the victory of our common cause.

Those who act at the right moment, hit the nazis on the head.

One felt that this was the beginning of the end. Hitler's final victory had been reduced to a fiction. At the same time those who looked forward to a rapid development proved to have been mistaken. Napoleon's story repeated itself. The invader succeeded in occupying a large part of European Russia and the Russian army was retreating all the time, waiting for the moment to hit back and repel the enemy. When the Russian supply lines had been drastically shortened, the Russian forces regrouped themselves and began a counter-offensive with the firm support of their ally Winter. Hitler had sent his men into the bitter cold without proper equipment. The counter-offensive was successful. In the following summer the Germans advanced again, but in the second winter of their campaign they had to retreat even further than the year before. In the winter of 1944 the German defeat in the east was completed.

There were signs that Japan would not remain a spectator of the world conflict; but when would she come in and where?

In the Netherlands East Indies our military preparedness

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had attained the highest possible level, thanks to the foresight of the Governor-General and the commanders of land and naval forces. Nevertheless our forces were no match for the large Japanese fleet and landing army.

Fully aware of the danger the Governor-General, Tjarda van Starkenborgh Stachouwer, gave an example of firmness and courage to all in the months preceding the Japanese invasion. He addressed the public on several occasions and inspired courage and calm determination with his speeches.

Although of course the connections with the east and west did not work as smoothly as in peace-time, we in London could form a clear picture of Starkenborgh's attitude, from his speeches and from his reports, which always testified to his statesmanship and his intention to defend the Netherlands East Indies to the very last. He foresaw everything and thought of everything. Among the problems he considered was the question of communication with the government in case the Netherlands East Indies should be occupied. He appointed a commission consisting of leading personalities, which should keep in contact with London from outside the Indies if the worst should come to the worst.

In London one felt how dangerous the situation was in the east, and one lived in tense expectation of what had to happen. Nobody, however, foresaw an event like Pearl Harbour. The news of the bombing of the American fleet by the Japanese came as a complete surprise. It was immediately followed by declarations of war on Japan from America, our allies and ourselves. The attack on Pearl Harbour was the introduction to a tremendous Japanese offensive, which was also directed against the Netherlands East Indies.

I need not recall the particularly rapid sequence of events; everyone remembers the brave resistance put up by our land, naval and air forces. And who will ever forget the Battle of the Java Sea, when our ships and the Allied auxiliary fleet were sunk by the Japanese?

Who does not remember the mourning and dismay in so many families that had to lose a loved one?

In my proclamation of March 3rd, 1942, I said:



Associated Press, Amsterdam

Queen Juliana



Anpfoto, Amsterdam

'Long live the Queen!' 4 September 1948



Edge of a forest

Water-colour painting by the author

Fellow-countrymen,

I feel impelled to pay homage with all of you to our fleet in the Netherlands East Indies for its splendid work. In the attack on vastly superior forces it has gloriously maintained the honour of our flag, and together with our allies has inflicted heavy losses on the enemy. Thus it has lived up to the spirit of our great admirals and their crews, the spirit of our great past which has always manifested itself in glorious feats of arms and has compelled respect for our flag all over the world.

We remember with deep gratitude all those who died as heroes in the defence of our beautiful empire. We know that this time we too have suffered heavy losses in ships.

I am convinced that I interpret the feelings of all sincere patriots when I say even now: 'Our navy will rise again, stronger than before.' A start to this will be made immediately. Like the *Van Galen*, which went down gloriously at Rotterdam but within two years once again carried our proud flag across the seas, the other lost units will be speedily replaced. This is a duty we owe to all those who gave their lives and to the whole of the empire.

We must do the impossible to help the Indies in the great struggle, because we know that only they are beaten who admit defeat. We are not beaten, and the battle is not over for us. Our navy continues to fight and will enter history with a glorious record, for having defended the whole kingdom in this world-wide struggle, with a courage and devotion that will assure us of final victory and thereby of the independence of our entire territory. . . .

The battle of the Java Sea was soon followed by the conquest of Java and the occupation of the most important strategic points in other parts of the Netherlands East Indies.

The commission I just mentioned left the country before the capitulation and went to Australia. After a time it divided itself between London and America according to the demands of the situation.

The Governor-General, who stayed at his post till the very last, was taken to Formosa as a prisoner and then transferred to Manchuria, where he spent the rest of the war.

There was a deeply moving moment when Radio Bandung concluded its last broadcast: 'We are now closing down. Farewell until better times! Long live the Queen!'

For a few days the national anthem was still heard from the studio in the evening. Then this Dutch voice fell completely

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silent. Those who had been responsible for the broadcasting of the anthem were executed by the occupying forces.

The Netherlands and the Indies were separated and a ruthless conqueror could treat the country and the people with the arbitrary cruelty that marked most of his actions. Soon prisons and concentration camps began to fill up with innocents, as in the Netherlands.

It was only long after that we heard that not all resistance had been broken; in the depths of the country small units of the army held out with an almost superhuman toughness and perseverance, carrying out the order given to all our forces to keep up resistance to the very last. Afterwards the commander of a patrol of a hundred and twenty-five men, of whom fourteen had survived, presented me with the flag that had proudly flown over their encampment during all those months. This costly relic is now preserved in a glass case in the palace in Amsterdam.

In the silence and solitude of my exile, where all the reports I received told of misfortunes and hardship and sorrow, and where I suffered so much myself, I was often led to compare the fate of the Netherlands and myself to the experiences of Job at the time of his adversity.

At first I was unable to detach myself from the gloom of the Book of Job. Then I realized how Job had had to find the right attitude to God and life in the only possible way, by passing through an ordeal. When he had found it, God accorded him a new period of prosperity as a visible token of his loving care in matters of this life as well as the next.

I received the survivors of the naval battles who had come to England. From what they told me I could get an idea of the courage that had been displayed and the hardships that had been suffered by so many of our men during the battle and after. Some of the shipwrecked had floated for days in the scorching sun, supported by their life-jackets, exhausted and thirsty, until they reached the shore. Some of them had even been threatened by patches of burning oil. Among those

who visited me there were men who had seen their ship with their comrades go down within three minutes.

Doorman's words: 'I am attacking, follow me,' addressed to the commanders of the Allied fleet under his command, are fully representative of the spirit in which the battle was fought.

One of the few survivors of the *De Ruyter* told me that, when the wounded who could be transported had left with the rest of the crew, Rear-Admiral Doorman and the commander of the *De Ruyter* had gone to the sick-bay and had spent their last moments with the men who were so severely wounded that they could not be moved.

At that time there was still no sign to be observed that pointed to an early liberation of the Netherlands. For us, in spite of the fighting everywhere, the war made no progress. And yet this laborious struggle had to be fought, at the expense of millions of lives, in order to exhaust the enemy's immense resources. Only then could the Netherlands be freed from their oppressor. Not until later that year did the victories over the enemy become so convincing that it could be assumed that his war potential would be affected.

On the 6th of May 1942 I began my broadcast to the people at home as follows:

With you, with the members of the empire in east and west, and supported by the sympathy of the entire civilized world, I am profoundly shocked at the news of the execution of seventy-two of our countrymen.

With you I want to pay homage to their memory, homage to their courage and patriotism.

The Netherlands will never forget the martyrs who fell for their liberation. Name by name, person by person, they will continue to live in our memory.

On this occasion, where these seventy-two are concerned, the executioners admit their atrocious act. Alas, many of us know that a great number of others have been killed besides, of whose death we are never or only much later informed. Although we do not even know how many they are, we want to remember them as well, in respect and piety. . . .

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This murder was to be followed by many others. I need not say how deep our sorrow was every time we received news of more executions.

Soon after the war in the Indies I began to prepare for my visit to President Roosevelt and the United States.

Roosevelt's declaration of war on Japan, after Pearl Harbour, had removed all the theoretical problems that could have been created by a visit from me, as a belligerent, to a 'neutral' country—even though behind this neutrality there always lay a sincere friendship for the Allies.

Early in the summer of 1942 I set out on my journey to the New World. On the 16th of June I boarded a plane which took me to Ireland where a flying-boat was waiting, sent by President Roosevelt to take me to America. It was my first flight.

When I arrived in Ireland the weather forecast was unfavourable and my departure was postponed. My party and I were hospitably received by a few families living nearby. I had with me the director of the Queen's Secretariat and two young *Engelandvaarders* whom I had invited so that they could tell the Americans what life in occupied Holland was really like. In America we were joined by a few other members of my entourage and by Van Kleffens, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, who accompanied me on the official part of my tour.

The next day it was good flying weather. The take-off and the landing of a flying-boat are majestic performances. It requires an immense surface of water, and it circles for miles over land and water before it alights. The take-off from the water is more impressive than that of an ordinary aircraft. It was a wonderful experience to see the sunset above the clouds that evening.

The next morning we reached the coast of Newfoundland with its melting snow and its little creeks cutting through the dark forests.

At Ottawa airport I was met by my daughter with the two little ones, who were somewhat overawed by the roaring monster which had brought me. Mackenzie King, the Canadian Prime Minister, who had shown himself a great friend

of our country and who had helped Juliana in many ways, was also there to welcome us. Our happiness at seeing each other again was indescribable. How I enjoyed Juliana's charming house in Rockliffe Park, in the middle of the woods overlooking a little lake. There was just enough room for Juliana's family until Margriet arrived; so before her birth they moved into a slightly larger house in Acacia Avenue. I seem to remember that I spent the night with the Athlones at Government House; during the day I was with Juliana.

After a few days we took the night train to Lee, Massachusetts, where Juliana had rented a country-house with a bungalow for me in the grounds. I received a great many people there.

One of our visitors was President Roosevelt, accompanied by Märtha of Norway, who often stayed with him. We were soon to be his and Mrs Roosevelt's guests at Hyde Park. All this was not new for Juliana, who had already travelled in the United States a couple of times, on the President's invitation; she had visited him to convey messages from me, so she felt completely at home at Hyde Park and was acquainted with the people and the surroundings and the way of life. To me everything was new, and meeting the President and Mrs Roosevelt was an experience, although even at the first meeting with him I felt as if I was addressing an old friend, so cordial were his feelings for the Netherlands and for Juliana, Bernhard, the children and me.

My respect and admiration had not only been aroused by my correspondence with him and the messages he had sent me; even more, perhaps, had I been impressed by his 'fireside chats' (to which I could listen regularly at Stubbings at 3 a.m.) and his statesmanship, first as a sympathizing neutral, then as an ally in the war. Meeting him, one was impressed by his strong personality, his will-power and perseverance, which had been steeled by his courage in dealing with the consequences of the poliomyelitis which had struck him years before. One felt certain that he would never yield and never abandon a cause he considered just, but would persevere in battle until he had attained his goal.

Meeting Mrs Roosevelt was also quite an experience. A

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very independent woman, who in between all her duties as the President's wife found the time to write a daily article and to publish descriptions of her travels in many parts of the world, she was above all a devoted wife to her husband, doing all she could to lighten his sufferings and always ready to replace him at events which his physical condition prevented him from attending.

When after the week-end at Hyde Park I paid an official visit to Washington, and stayed at the White House, I took part in one of the President's Press conferences as well as in one his wife held for women journalists. Both made the conferences easy and pleasant for me. I admired their gift for answering questions and for conducting the exchanges.

I shall not yield to the temptation to give a description of my tour, although there are many things I could tell about those two months with their busy and varied programme. I shall limit myself to noting that I was received on Capitol Hill and addressed Congress, that President Roosevelt presented me with a destroyer for our Navy and finally that he took me on a boat trip to Mount Vernon to see Washington's house and tomb. I laid a wreath on the tomb, as well as on that of the unknown soldier in Arlington cemetery. Our ambassador gave a reception, where I added many interesting encounters to those I owed to the President.

On my tour I visited Albany, which used to be called Nassau, the capital of New York State, and New York City and Boston, including Harvard University. Everywhere I visited I was greeted with abundant kindness and received many marks of sympathy with the Netherlands. There were always speeches, to which I replied, trying to impress the audience with the distress and the irrepressible spirit of liberty of the Dutch people.

In the course of my tour I had many important conversations and established many contacts. I attached special weight to the reception of members of the Dutch colonies. With some of them I talked at length about conditions at home, with the intention that they should give information about them in America. Information of that kind was badly needed for our allies, as well as for Dutchmen living in America, who

were simply unable to imagine the atrocities committed by the occupying power, the resistance and the nameless sufferings of our people. For my children and myself and for those of my entourage who came from Holland, information work was among the first duties. A valuable contribution was made during my tour by the two *Engelandvaarders* who accompanied me, Ter Beek and Krediet.

I retain special memories of a reception for the Dutch colony in New York. I can still see the guests as they came by, led by the members of the armed forces and first of all, before the naval officers, Mrs Doorman, the rear-admiral's widow.

New York was an important centre for our forces and there was also a large and much-frequented seamen's home, which I visited. The meeting with our sailors, whose contribution to our war effort was so important, made a strong impression on me.

On my return to Lee, where Juliana and her party had stayed, another ceremony awaited me. I presented our flag to the naval air force and a standard to the air force, both stationed in America to undergo their training. We then returned to Ottawa, where I spent a few days on an official visit. I was the guest of my niece Alice and the Governor-General at their official residence. There were two dinners, one at Government House and the other at the pleasant Country Club, given by the government; I had already spent a morning at the Country Club shortly after my arrival, when I accompanied Juliana and the children to the swimming-pool. In between, the Athlones found time to take us on a trip to the Seignior Club, where Juliana had spent her first days in Canada. We went out on the river in a canoe.

In the course of my stay Bernhard came for a few days to see Juliana. In Ottawa I said good-bye to Juliana and the children and went to Montreal, where I received the large Dutch colony, which included many seamen. From Montreal I returned to England.

Some readers may think that Juliana devoted the years of her exile almost exclusively to her children. This idea is the more understandable as little news from faraway Canada

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ever reached the occupied fatherland, but it is decidedly incorrect. Of course she gave much attention to her children, but at the same time she devoted much of her time and energy to the 'good cause'. Her home was a port and coaling-station for our fighters of the navy and the merchant navy. She listened sympathetically to the account of their difficulties and anxieties, and, strong in spirit, inspired them to new action in the cause of freedom. In later years, when she became Queen, she said that her ambition was to be a rock amid the turbulent waves. During her exile she showed herself capable of being just that.

Apart from her inspiring contact with our forces on the other side of the ocean, there was also the contact with the Dutch colonies in Canada and the United States, where she played her part to keep the fires burning. Then there was her Red Cross work—she directed the Netherlands Red Cross abroad which she had created. Although the chair in The Hague to which she had succeeded her father was no longer hers, her activity as president continued.

I must also mention her efforts to maintain and promote good will for the Netherlands everywhere, and particularly in Canada and the United States—an important task in war-time, which included giving information about conditions in the fatherland and about the increasing popular resistance. She also went to Surinam and the Dutch Antilles. It was a moving moment when she saw the islands from the air—there, below her, was free Dutch territory, at last she was 'at home' again. The emotion was not one-sided; her visit can be said to have strengthened the ties with the militant peoples in the west.

In Juliana we had a source of strength for the Dutch cause across the ocean, and a forceful representative of the nation with two of our most important allies.

On my return to Ireland I found to my consternation that flags were flying at half-mast. I learned that George of Kent had died in an air crash.

Back at Stubbings I began at last to feel the effects of the strain to which I had been subjected for the last years. Added

to this there were my fatigue after the tour and the consequences of a slight compression of my ear-drums, owing to the quick changes of altitude on my flight, which were diagnosed by a Dutch ear-specialist of the Irene Brigade. As I was suffering from dizziness and exhaustion I had to promise that I would work only half-time for the next six weeks. At the end of that period fortunately the unpleasant consequences had been overcome.

A genuine feeling of solidarity developed between the heads of state in London who had been compelled by Hitler's aggression to leave their countries and to continue their work in exile, or at least to further the interests of their nations with every means at their disposal. We visited each other, invited each other to intimate luncheon, and shared in each other's joys and sorrows and in those of our nations. At family ceremonies all were invited.

I remember with particular gratitude the hospitality I received from the English Royal Couple when I arrived in the United Kingdom. The ties of friendship remained strong during the whole of my stay in England and we exchanged invitations frequently.

It is not without reason that I referred to heads of state, for our group included the President of Poland, whose people put up such brave resistance against the conqueror.

I judged it desirable that I should meet many prominent Allied personalities in order to form my own impression of them. Van Kleffens or our ambassador arranged the appointments for me. Thus I received General de Gaulle, who wanted to pay his respects; General Sikorski, the Polish Prime Minister who crashed in his aeroplane shortly after; Masaryk, also no longer alive; Bech, the Prime Minister of Luxemburg; General Smuts; several Belgian ministers and others; I had important conversations with them all.

With Churchill and Eden I had regular contact through my annual luncheon-party at Claridge's and Churchill's annual invitation to a luncheon or dinner, where Eden was also present. The Lord Mayor of London also invited me to his table, and of course I reciprocated.

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In the late autumn of 1942 the news came of the Allied victories in and around the Mediterranean. Dutch forces took part in these operations and distinguished themselves honourably. Both the navy and the merchant navy carried out important assignments. We entered 1943 with a more optimistic view of the war.

In the autumn of 1942 I was given a medical check at the instance of my son-in-law to see if I could fly to Ottawa that winter to welcome my new grandchild. To my disappointment it was established that my 'ceiling' lay at ten thousand feet, and then only for a few minutes. It was enough for crossing the Atlantic in summer, but not in winter, when the flying was done at higher altitudes, so I had to abandon my hope of seeing my daughter. Fortunately Bernhard could go. I had to exercise patience until the spring or early summer.

Bernhard arrived in Ottawa just before Margriet's birth. The Canadian government had very kindly arranged that the room in the hospital where the child was to be born would be declared extra-territorial soil. Without that the child would have Canadian nationality, like everyone born in Canada.

It was a great joy to me when Bernhard telephoned at about 2 a.m. on the 20th of January to tell me that Juliana had had a daughter and that both were well. The parents decided to call her Margriet Francisca, the first name after the marguerite we wore as a token of resistance, and to ask the merchant navy to stand godfather to her. It was my task to inform the merchant navy of this decision; my children asked me to do it from London, because we would reach more ships from there than would have been possible from Ottawa. At seven o'clock that morning I had the news passed on to Radio Oranje with the request to broadcast it. Owing to a misunderstanding, however, it never got through. A few hours later there was to be a presentation of decorations which would be attended by many merchant seamen. As happened often, this meeting took place during an air-raid. It was now necessary for me to announce after the ceremony that the parents had decided that Margriet was to be the merchant navy's goddaughter. Later the merchant navy requested permission to wear the marguerite as a badge.

On the 21st of January I explained the choice of name in a broadcast speech:

In choosing this name it is the parents' intention to establish a life-long tie between our severely tried people in the occupied parts of the empire and the new-born child. . . .

Who does not remember the marguerites that bloom in meadow and field in the month of May, and that every year overlay the memory of all the suffering and the sorrow of those terrible days of May 1940 with their whiteness, whispering to us of a better future?

But above all this name represents our homage to the memory of our heroes on land and sea, wherever they may have fallen, and to those who lost their lives as martyrs for the sake of the fatherland.

May their memory live, not only in our hearts, but also by this new great happiness that God gives to my children.

May it soon be granted to Margriet to live in her fatherland, among her people, and, like her flowering namesakes of the fields, may she represent our living and constantly renewed homage to all those who made the great sacrifice, which will prove to be the seed from which will spring a truly free and great fatherland and empire.

I spent a long time alone at my solitary post that winter. Bernhard had been invited by Field Marshal Montgomery to visit Egypt and the Mediterranean countries which had recently been the main theatre of war. He had planned to make the tour after his visit to Juliana, but when everything was ready for the journey he fell ill with mumps and had to stay with Juliana for another fortnight; the children had been the first to catch the disease, followed by Juliana, who passed it on to Bernhard. When he heard that the aircraft in which he was to make the journey had crashed, he accepted this unwelcome interference with his plans gratefully. Another aeroplane took him safely first across the ocean, then to Egypt and finally, after his inspection of the scene of the Allied victories, back to London.

We were grateful to recognize the Guidance which had preserved him for his family through illness.

In my broadcast speeches I always raised an emphatic protest against the crimes of the occupying power in the Netherlands

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and expressed our feelings of unity with all those who suffered. Thus I said on the 17th of October 1942:

With great attention and profound anxiety I follow your increasing difficulties and sufferings in all fields; and no less constant is my attention to the insecurity of your existence, which becomes harder to bear every day; the bitter distress of thousands in prisons and concentration camps; in a word, all the spiritual and physical ill-treatment inflicted upon you by the hated enemy.

I share whole-heartedly in your indignation and sorrow at the fate of our Jewish countrymen; and with my whole people I feel this inhuman treatment, this systematic extermination of these countrymen who have lived for centuries with us in our blessed fatherland, as something done to us personally.

As you are at present prevented from expressing your feelings, I must do it for you.

As soon as it is possible we shall try to alleviate some part at least of the suffering.

My broadcast of the 24th of April 1943 began with the words:

Before I address you on other matters, I want to raise a fiery protest against the cunningly organized and constantly extended manhunt which the German hordes, assisted by national traitors, are carrying out all over the country.

Our language lacks the words to describe these infamous practices.

I can assure all those whose families have been dispersed that as soon as we are free the utmost will be done to bring back these new victims of the reign of terror and to alleviate their and your own suffering as much as possible.

In 1943 the Allied victories succeeded each other rapidly, but there was still no immediate prospect of our liberation. Early in June I crossed the ocean for the second time, on this occasion by bomber. For reasons of safety we went by way of Iceland, where we landed, and then continued to Ottawa with two further intermediate stops on Newfoundland and at Montreal.

It was a great joy to see my daughter and her two eldest children again. Juliana then took me to her new house,

Stornoway, in Acacia Avenue, Rockliffe Park, where I saw Margriet for the first time. I passed a happy fortnight with her.

Bernhard arrived just before his birthday. As a birthday present, he had chosen Margriet's christening ceremony. The service was to be a major occasion for Dutchmen, who came from all quarters, many of them privately and a great number of others as members of delegations. Of course there was a large delegation from the 'god-uncle', the merchant navy.

The other godparents were President Roosevelt, Queen Mary, my cousin Athlone and Mrs Röell. One of our navy chaplains in America, Dr Winfield Burggraaff, a Friesian by origin, conducted the service in excellent Dutch and performed the baptism. This took place in the Presbyterian church which Juliana attended, in a service just like our own. Burggraaff's sermon was wholly concerned with the Netherlands. He had achieved a thorough understanding of conditions at home, and the country was so much in the centre of the service that Margriet was almost forgotten.

Once again I visited President Roosevelt and his wife at Hyde Park. I spent an unofficial and very enjoyable long week-end with them, with Van Kleffens also present. How well I remember Roosevelt taking me round his estate in a car with exclusively hand-operated controls, and how visibly he enjoyed driving his own car. He also took me to the station in it; I can still see him waving to me from his car as the train moved out. His last words contained good wishes for the resurrection of the Netherlands who held such a special place in his heart and for us all.

That was the last time I saw him. Juliana went there again in the winter of 1944-5, and in March 1945, and was shocked to observe the change in his appearance. She was afraid he would not have much longer to live. In the spring of 1945 he died, a short time before the achievement of the goal towards which all his working and thinking had been directed for several years, his plan to liberate mankind from tyranny. He too gave his life for this cause.

I spent a few more days in Ottawa before returning to

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London. I met several important people at Juliana's house, among them Mrs Chiang Kai-shek, who was making a tour of Canada and the United States.

On the 23rd of November 1943 I said in a broadcast:

. . . liberation means that law and justice will return to our native soil and to all our lives, in short it means the revival of all the liberties with which we were brought up and which are dearer to us than ever before. As I said on an earlier occasion: at the first dawn of liberty, the new Netherlands will arise.

It is for this reason that I want to tell you how rich I feel in the possession of the products of your underground Press. I am delighted with the valuable materials it supplies for the new society, and with its encouragement to the study of future problems as well as with its criticisms.

The underground Press gives a striking example of depth of vision and seriousness. The deeper your present reflections are, and the more mature your convictions, the sooner they will take form in our future. I am happy to see how much your ideas and mine are now in accordance, in respect both of our future and of our spiritual battle against the dark forces of our time. I am thinking of the fight we both have to wage against our dual opponent: the enemy we are fighting at arms, and the war as such, which in the long run is bound to exhaust us spiritually.

We want to be strong, but not by soulless brute force; our strength, and even the force that is often necessary in times like these, must continue to be fed from the deepest sources of humanity, love of mankind and longing for 'the possibility and the right to live as a human being'.

Together we want to make the utmost effort to keep this flame burning.

I found this thought in an article in your underground Press, which I quote from memory.

This common effort is the solid mortar which unites us.

It is eminently suited to bring out all that Dutchmen have in common and all that is sacred and dear to us.

It is strength and consolation and support to all those who carry on that bitter battle every day, in oppression and suffering, against a ruthless regime of terror, until the rapidly approaching dawn of liberation breaks.

I am certain that I interpret your conviction when I say: to keep that flame burning means to win the peace; it is the guarantee of the realization of the future we all desire so fervently.

In the course of my years in London I received many resistance fighters, a mixed batch as regards profession and social background, but one in the will to fight, all of them steeled by indignation and all with the image of a new fatherland before their minds. They told me of their various activities in the common cause, of the help to the growing army of those who were living in hiding, of the problems of lodging and feeding and security connected with it; they told me of their audacious raids in order to obtain ration cards for the outlaws and to liberate comrades from prison, of the campaigns to obtain money for the resistance movement, of their gallant illegal Press, not to be deterred by execution squads, of their dangerous action in support of the Allied war effort, in short, of all the branches of this magnificent revelation of national strength and attachment to our highest goods. Their faith, hope and determination had to lay the foundations for the new fatherland.

Apart from the underground struggle, they also described to me the suffering and the misery to which our people were subjected, the cruelty of the oppressor for whom a human life counted as nothing, the killing of so many and the trampling upon spiritual values.

How much my comparatively recent experiences (of 1934) helped me to understand all the distress and the sorrow and to fathom the depths of all those miseries.

The *Engelandvaarders* I received sometimes individually and more often in groups of usually fifteen to twenty. The place of meeting was mostly Stubbings, but it might be Chester Square (I came regularly to London for government matters, never less than three times a week).

As a rule I received the *Engelandvaarders* at tea-time. At Stubbings I often took walks with them in the garden after tea. As I explained before, the doors of my house gave on to a small park with a lawn. I must have covered a good many miles walking and talking with them, from early spring until late autumn. Those who had suffered particularly, or who carried messages for me, I saw privately afterwards.

The next time I met them was at the ceremony at the embassy, when they received their decorations. Often I met

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them again later, when for instance they had distinguished themselves again. At first months elapsed between their arrival and their recommendation for a decoration, but later this was reduced to two or three weeks.

The way in which people were presented to me during the war was quite unlike what it had been in peace-time; but I shall not attempt to describe all the differences.

The organization of my contacts with the *Engelandvaarders* was handled by Mr Van 't Sant, at my special request. As I said before, he had accompanied me to England in charge of my security. Under the circumstances the problems that occurred were not always easy to solve. There was always the possibility of an enemy attempt to put me out of the way. Mr Van 't Sant fulfilled his duties in an exemplary way; during the London years he showed a clear awareness of all that was most important for me with regard to the Netherlands.

All members of the resistance movement and all those who were near to them will understand me when I say that the *Engelandvaarders* needed a considerable time to find their feet, that many things had to be done by them and for them before they had overcome the effects of their spiritual and physical experiences. It was only natural that it should take longer for some than for others. The most important thing was that they should be given a definite task which demanded all their energy and powers of concentration as soon as possible. I followed their careers with warm interest.

We always accorded our full sympathy to the navy, which took its share in the war effort in nearly all the seas, and to the merchant navy who made such an important contribution. Who will ever be able to appreciate all that our men at sea did for the nation, and all the sacrifices they made?

Millions of tons of war supplies and food from all parts of the world were carried to England and to the other allies by Dutch ships. At first these voyages were made with only a single gun on board and the ships crossed the sea all by themselves, exposed to bombs from the air, to torpedoes from submarines and to mines. In these circumstances acts of silent

heroism have been performed, some of which will never be known to us.

In a later period they sailed in large escorted convoys, protected by anti-aircraft guns. Convoys went as far as Murmansk, quite often in the heart of winter, carrying supplies for the Russian front when it was subjected to heavy enemy attacks. Many ships were sunk, and the crews sometimes floated about in open boats for several days, often with their bodies half frozen by the cold of the Polar Sea. I have seen these brave men in hospital, with amputated limbs, dependent on others for the rest of their lives; and there were many of them.

Our sympathy also went to our dauntless fishermen, who braved the dangers of the sea in order to assure the supplies of fish, which were so important to the war economy.

The information we received about all this was confirmed to me in the official reports recommending the award of decorations, which described the events faithfully and at length. During the ceremony at the embassy I recalled in a few words the most important feats of the recipients. I retain unforgettable memories of these ceremonies.

The decorated men included those who had distinguished themselves in the navy, the merchant navy, the army and the air force, but also *Engelandvaarders* who were rewarded for their perilous crossing with the Cross of Merit, or, if they had taken part in military operations on the way, received the Bronze Cross. By the time they received their decorations, many of them, of course, were already incorporated in fighting units. It happened more than once that a group of *Engelandvaarders* came to a ceremony with no others present. On such occasions I always said a few words about the conditions at home.

I am also deeply grateful to our air force. Our pilots, few in number at first—many had lost their lives in the unequal Battle of the Netherlands—distinguished themselves from the first. New pilots were trained both in England and in America. Many of the *Engelandvaarders* volunteered for the air force and after obtaining their pilot's licence fought bravely in Allied units.

We were also intensely interested in our Irene Brigade,

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which was commanded by Dutch officers and formed part of Field Marshal Montgomery's army. It distinguished itself in Normandy and afterwards fought on Dutch soil for our liberation, side by side with French, Polish, British, American and Canadian units.

Halfway through 1943 the fighting moved from the African coast across the Mediterranean to Sicily and then on to the Italian mainland. Mussolini was overthrown, and the Allies penetrated triumphantly to the heart of Italy.

Gradually England seemed to fill up with troops. It was not immediately clear what the purpose of these troop concentrations could be. Was an enemy landing still expected or were these preparations for the invasion of Europe? The enemy had brought paratroops to the coast. Later it turned out that they were reinforcements of the troops that had to defend the 'West Wall'. Not surprisingly, the troop movements in England provoked heavy air-raids, particularly on the airfields and on London.

The British army had long been sending Commando troops on raids to different parts of the continent. The troops occupied a few points and maintained themselves for some time before re-embarking. In this way valuable data was collected which would be useful at the moment of the invasion, when the war was carried on to the mainland of Europe. The training of the Commandos was particularly rigorous; the utmost was demanded of their will-power and endurance. In spite of all they had been through already, a number of our boys also volunteered for this training.

The air at Stubbings was polluted by the factories of the neighbouring industrial town of Slough, which made the atmosphere oppressively heavy. Gradually I began to long for cleaner air, and also I would rather have a smaller house in keeping with my way of life. In reaction to my former obligation to live in excessively large and often forbidding surroundings, I had and still have a preference for small houses. I looked round for something more suitable and soon was offered a little country place near South Mimms, on the

other side of London. This was exactly what I wanted, hilly country where the air was refreshing and the woods just behind the house for walks! There was something reminiscent of Holland about the house, which also pleased me.

Soon afterwards I moved in, and found great relief. At first there was no bombing in the neighbourhood, but after a time this changed. We could see the battle over the airfields and the bright light of tracer bullets and searchlights. Towards the evening we heard and saw the bomb explosions.

Then one Sunday night, the 20th of February 1944, there was a heavy explosion nearby, in the wood; at the same moment we heard an aircraft over our heads and an even heavier explosion followed almost at once, this time only a yard and a half from the house. One sentry on duty was killed instantly, another was fatally wounded. The sergeant who was inspecting the guard suffered from shock.

The foundations, which were made of concrete, kept the house from collapsing. All that happened was that it shifted a little off its foundations, and that cracks appeared in the walls.

Mrs Verbrugge, my companion in England, and I had our rooms on the other side of the house and received the smallest impact of the explosion. There could nevertheless be no doubt as to what had occurred. I felt the house rock beneath my feet like a ship heaving in heavy seas. Against the incline of the floor, I hastened to the door which fortunately was not jammed, as it had been open. With indescribable tension I waited for the next bomb, which would certainly mean the end of all our lives. I could still hear the bomber roaring over the house, but the third bomb did not come.

Downstairs I heard Sergeant Beerman calling out: 'Where is the Queen?' At the same time a nasty smell of gas, smoke and flames came towards me. I replied at once: 'Here I am; I am all right.'

The sentry indoors had with great presence of mind extinguished the beginnings of a fire. Beerman helped me down what had been the stairs, now only a confused tangle of footholds. . . . Stepping across bricks, grit and pieces of wood I reached the kitchen, where I found several people lying on

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the floor. They had had a much worse shock than I. Mrs Verbrugge and I were taken to the shelter in the garden. It was feared that a time-bomb might have been dropped and might explode at any moment.

Apart from our military police, who showed great spirit and presence of mind, I should also mention the detective-sergeant from Scotland Yard who was on special duty with my guard. He rendered many valuable services and after the bombing he dealt very competently with the situation.

In view of the possible presence of a time-bomb the local police allowed us only ten minutes to return to the house and pack our things, and then requested us to leave. It was quite a long journey back to Stubbings that night. We had to avoid London, where the bombing was in full progress; we could see many fires. Bernhard and Van 't Sant met us at Stubbings. It was about two o'clock at night.

A few days later Bernhard and I attended the funeral of our faithful guards. It was a very sad occasion.

At Stubbings too we heard the Germans coming over night after night, heading for the neighbouring airfield, on their way to London. When there had been an air-raid warning I spent the night in the old wine-cellar, which was relatively safe. It was a restless winter.

In spite of all the burdens and adventures I remained myself and I continued hoping for the experience of a London fog. I had heard many stories of all that London had suffered from this enemy during the war before I was finally allowed to meet him myself. It happened in the middle of the day while I was receiving an *Engelandvaarder* at Chester Square. We were sitting opposite each other at the big old-fashioned table; the person who had introduced my guest sat next to me. We were talking busily when suddenly it began to grow dark; the *Engelandvaarder* grew steadily vaguer in outline and in the end disappeared altogether. When I looked at the person next to me I found that he was also disappearing until there was only a silhouette left. This seemed to last about ten minutes. Then the *Engelandvaarder* gradually returned to visibility, became a recognizable shape and soon turned into my visitor

again. At the same time the other person resumed his normal appearance and the room became lighter. Within twenty minutes the London air was as clear as before and I could drive back to Stubbings as usual.

Following the British example we had founded a women's auxiliary corps, and later also the equivalent of the W.R.N.S., the Marva, consisting of Dutch women and girls as well as volunteers from Surinam and the Dutch Antilles.

The Women's Auxiliary Corps (V.H.K.) was also trained for duties that would be required when those who had been deported by the enemy returned to the Netherlands. I attended one of those courses myself and took part in an excursion the class made to see how their knowledge should be applied. We were not aware at the time that extensive preparations had already been made at home which would reduce the role of the V.H.K. to a supplementary one.

On one occasion when we were the guests of the King and Queen of England—I think this was in 1944—the King informed me that he had appointed me to the Order of the Garter, and presented me with the insignia of the order. In my reply I said that I saw this honour as a sign of the King's and the British people's appreciation of the resistance offered by the Dutch people and that it gave me great pleasure for that reason. The King expressly confirmed my interpretation.

It was very interesting for me to observe the working of the British parliamentary system during the war years. I found it well worth a study in the country where it originated.

It is also worth recalling that during those years the first steps were made towards a close co-operation of the Netherlands, Belgium and Luxemburg after the war, the so-called Benelux.

Of course I was also informed that Hitler, having recognized the impossibility of bringing our people to his side, was planning to deport the whole of the nation, a process he

described as 'liquidation', and to replace it by devoted followers.

I refused to believe that this terrible prospect would ever be realized. Of course I never doubted that Hitler was capable of such a crime, but I believed firmly that God would resurrect the Netherlands. When I heard the news, I did not yet know that this plan had come so close to being executed.

Before I start on the description of events immediately preceding our liberation, there is something else I want to say concerning the *Engelandvaarders* and the reports we received from the fatherland. There were considerable differences between the groups arriving in London over the years. Their social background varied, their aims were not always identical, and the ways by which they had come and the length of their journey were also different. They had all kinds of experiences behind them and they brought widely divergent impressions of life in the Netherlands.

Later there were groups who wanted to fight for the liberation of the Indies or who wanted to form part of the Civil Service when Van Mook re-established our authority over the islands. Many of them tried to cross the sea directly from Holland, some preferred the hazardous way via Belgium and France to Spain, and then tried to find a ship in Portugal to take them to Britain. Those who chose the northern route, which was less dangerous, but took much longer, usually managed to get as far as Sweden, but then it might be years before they had the permission and the opportunity to continue their journey. Large numbers of *Engelandvaarders* gathered in Sweden, and the war was nearly over when at last they came to London. I received these people at Netherlands House, because Stubbings was not large enough.

Unfortunately they had little news to tell me, having left home such a long time ago. They were practically the last group of *Engelandvaarders* to arrive. It should not, however, be thought that we were insufficiently informed of what went on in the Netherlands. The reports that reached us by secret ways were so numerous and many-sided that I gradually

obtained a clear picture of the situation. The only drawback I felt was that I had not experienced it all personally.

We were still in the dark as to the moment of our liberation, in spite of many encouraging signs. In the spring of 1944 the air was full of promise. I abandoned my long-cherished plan to visit Juliana again when better flying weather had returned. There was no objection against my *going*, but my return just before a big offensive might have given a hint to the enemy. How long would our separation last this time?

In order to be as fit as possible at the moment of the liberation I resumed my search for a house in cleaner air.

I found a house called Laneswood, in Mortimer near Reading, which suited my taste in many respects. It was a little further from London; for a large part of the way we drove on winding country roads through a beautiful park-like countryside. On the way we passed Ascot and Windsor, and I saw the island in the river where a commemoration stone recalls the signing of Magna Charta; we did not come to the main road until just outside London, which had the additional advantage that there was less danger from bombs.

It is worth mentioning that Laneswood was only a few miles from an American airfield, from which flights were made almost constantly; thus I had the satisfaction of hearing the bombers on their way to Germany every night.

I imagined that my stay there would last only a few months. Little did I suspect that it would be over a year before I returned to the fatherland; that I was to spend another winter and another spring there.

On the 9th of May I said in a broadcast:

I fervently wish to contribute my modest share to the effort which continues to demand our utmost exertions: the realization of the vision of all those who gave their lives for you and for a better fatherland. Only thus can we pay full homage to the memory of our fallen heroes and heroines and martyrs.

But at the same time we must not forget the many thousands of men

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and women in our midst who have continued the work of those who fell, who have shown their preparedness to risk everything for the good cause: 'their patriotism and their love for humanity have made them nobles in the finest sense of the word', as your underground Press admirably put it.

As soon as I have returned among you, plans will be made to honour those who have taken over that great task.

I trust that all those who are not immediately exposed to danger, but who can offer direct help, are conscious of the strength that can come from them too and of their duty towards the fatherland in this respect.

At this point I want to address a few words to those of you who are wives and mothers. I know your unequalled courage and strength in facing all trials and making all sacrifices, including the heaviest of all: parting with those who are most dear to you, fortified by the same vision of the future that many of them carried with them into death.

Always the prop of your families, always the silent force behind everything; and all this behind the scenes, without any fuss.

Only when the history of this terrible time is written, and when all you did and suffered is known, will the size of your share in the victory appear and occupy a page among the finest and richest in human feeling.

After several weeks of tension—when would D-day come?—we finally received the news of the landings in Normandy, followed a little later by reports of the first successes and the advance of the army. Many of our boys were fighting in different branches of the armed forces. Early in September the Allies reached our frontier.

Juliana, who had followed the events closely, received a request from us to come immediately, in order to be present at the moment of the liberation. She arrived by air on the 9th of September.

On one of those days decorations were presented at Stubbing; London was not a suitable place for the ceremony owing to the V.r.s. I mentioned the encouraging reports which pointed to an early liberation—the news all were awaiting—and then passed on to the presentation. We held a flag parade with our detachment of military police and then sang the *Wilhelmus*, unaccompanied, as there was no military band. Had not Gerbrandy spoken very hopefully? *He* ought to know.

During the autumn of 1943, when our plans for the period following the liberation had reached an advanced stage, the Allies informed us of the measures they considered necessary when the Germans had been driven from the Netherlands and the country had been occupied by the Allies in anticipation of the enemy's collapse.

In order that the occupation and its inevitable measures should weigh as little as possible on the population, they made a proposal, which we appreciated highly, that our government should create a body which would provide the link between their command and the population and would act as the civil branch of the occupation authority. As the war would still be going on, however, it should be a military organization. We agreed to the proposal on the same grounds on which it was based and the organization was given the name of Military Authority (*Militair Gezag*, M.G.).

This agreement with the Allies overthrew all our previous plans, but it had the advantage of giving us a firm basis to work on. Colonel Kruls was put in charge of the preparations for Military Authority, and later became its chief of staff. He and his staff started work at once.

At first this new arrangement was little understood, even in London. This changed when the organization came into being, although some people were far from pleased when they discovered that it would mean the curtailment of their own powers. When the liberation of the southern Netherlands was imminent, Military Authority moved to Brussels and from there entered the country to assume its functions.

As the Allied armies approached our frontier, we received an increasing number of reports dealing with the plans of the resistance movement for assisting them. The government and I were full of interest and appreciation for their plans and we considered how they had best be combined with those of the Allied forces.

Just at this moment I saw in the newspapers that the Maquis had been incorporated in the Allied forces. The Maquis had originally been the name of the French resistance groups who had retired into the mountains; later the name was extended

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to the whole of the French armed-resistance movement. They were given the status of combatants under their own commander, General Koenig.

I saw at once that a similar arrangement would have to be made for our own forces of the interior. I rushed to the telephone and rang up Mr Gerbrandy, who was minister for general war affairs at the time, to draw his attention to the news and to ask him if it were not desirable that we should obtain the same status for our resistance men. I also suggested my son-in-law as commander. Mr Gerbrandy fell in with my suggestions and spoke to the Allied High Command.

I shall not easily forget the moment when I telephoned Bernhard about this and immediately received his surprised and enthusiastic consent.

The Allied High Command which of course had to take the initiative gave its full co-operation. Within a few days everything had been arranged. It was a great day for us in London when we were told that it was now official. Our boys would no longer be shot by the enemy as *franc-tireurs*. The enemy was obliged to treat them as prisoners of war when they fell into his hands; they could claim all the privileges conferred by the status of combatant.

General Eisenhower as Commander-in-Chief appointed my son-in-law commander of our armed forces; on the Dutch side I appointed him by Royal Decree. This was done as soon as the B.S.¹ had been incorporated in the Allied forces.

Thus Bernhard had at last found the task that suited his status and capacities; a fine and honourable assignment, to liberate the fatherland as the commander of our boys, side by side with our allies.

A few days later we received the reply from the B.S., who declared themselves most pleased with the appointment.

I followed the progress of the war from hour to hour with passionate attention. I had to take note of all reports, no matter whence or how they came. The wireless was on all day and the sergeant on duty in the house had instructions

¹ Translator's note: *Binnenlandse Strijdkrachten*: Forces of the Interior.

to tell me everything he heard. His duties included keeping the map up to date, so that it would indicate the latest advances of the army. Then I also had to be told of orders from the Allied High Command which might be addressed to our B.S. or else might concern them in some way.

Maastricht was the first town to be liberated. The news arrived when I was talking to an *Engelandvaarder* from the same province. Indescribable joy! Bernhard went there at once.

Soon the advance of the Allied troops permitted the establishment of our forces H.Q. on Dutch soil. After a while it moved to Anneville near Breda. All the liberated towns and provinces were visited by my son-in-law.

One Sunday in September Juliana and I saw a unique spectacle on our walk: a large American air-fleet, part of which had taken off from the airfield near my house, was on its way to our fatherland with its supplies and paratroops. The British fleet, which took off from bases elsewhere, we could not see; this was the force that transported the units who were to be engaged in the Battle of Arnhem.

Meanwhile 'Mad Tuesday'¹ had occurred at home. What deep disappointment followed it and how much misery and deprivation the northern part of our country was still to suffer! The burden of cares grew heavier, the news more and more disquieting, and then there was the frightening prospect that the worst was still to come.

The B.S. in the south were given the task of occupying important points and sometimes whole districts, while the Allied army continued its advance. They remained at their posts all through the winter and early spring. Repeated efforts by Bernhard to have these men properly equipped were long unsuccessful, as the Allied Command itself was short of equipment. They had to make do with their scanty clothing all during that bitterly cold period. The enemy did not spare them and many of them fell at their posts along our rivers and dikes.

¹ Translator's note: September 5th, 1944, when reports that the Germans were evacuating the Rhine delta caused general excitement in the Dutch northern provinces, where crowds lined the roads waiting for the Allied troops.

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In the course of September and October the Allies occupied Zeeland Flanders, and this was followed by the tragic flooding of the Isle of Walcheren, the first steps towards the liberation of the Islands of Zeeland. In Zeeland Flanders even women took part in the fighting. Some Zeelanders came to London a few months after, still visibly affected by all they had been through, and gave Juliana and myself a vivid picture of their experiences.

That autumn I addressed an invitation to the resistance leaders in the north to send a deputation to me of a few people representative of the resistance movement as a whole, who would be able to inform me of their work, of the feelings of the population and the general condition of the country. This invitation could not be accepted, as the men were indispensable.

When this plan had fallen through, I felt all the more strongly the need for a meeting and an exchange of ideas with a representative group from the liberated south, which also had its problems and worries. A prominent personality in each of the three provinces of the south was invited to come to Stubbings, with a delegation selected by himself and representative of as many sections of the population as possible. The idea was that the three groups should visit me simultaneously. It was Bernhard's task to prepare their journey and to overcome all the obstacles created by the war. It took no less than two months.

In the meantime, thanks to Bernhard's good offices, a number of people from the south were already coming to London to give me information. I asked them many questions to complete my picture of the situation at home. They were people from various walks of life, many of them underground workers.

Everywhere in the liberated provinces there were shortages of nearly everything and life was completely disrupted. Destruction was widespread, and the Germans had evacuated the population of certain parts, such as the inhabitants of Roermond, in Limburg, who had been sent to Friesland (they made the journey led by the bishop, and were not only gener-

ously received but made many friends). Many Limburgers had also been evacuated to the northern provinces of Groningen and Drente.

The transport of supplies for an advancing army always presents many problems. It requires an extensive road system, preferably in addition to the roads used by the army itself. Those who know the provinces of Brabant and Limburg will understand that the High Command was faced with tremendous problems.

Understandable as the delay was, it was hard for the civilian population of those districts to have to wait so long for help. Young children in particular suffered. We did all we could to send supplies from England, but these were also held up by the war.

In the face of the greatest difficulties and in constant danger of their lives, line-crossers from the north still came to the headquarters of the B.S. in order to maintain contact between the two sections of the B.S. and the resistance movement, and to prepare the co-operation with the Allied armies and receive orders to be carried out in the north. They included commanders of underground fighting units who were impatiently awaiting the great moment and who were often only with difficulty dissuaded from taking impetuous action.

The contacts established with the north involved the resistance movement in its entirety. Bernhard sent several of the men from the north on to me, leading members of fighting units as well as people who had taken part in the civilian resistance and who could now be spared. They reported to me and to my ministers. Their accounts confirmed the correctness of my previous information about the fatherland. It was now possible for me to ask questions, and to obtain a picture that was complete politically as well as in other respects.

The impressions they gave me of the shortages were terrifying. There was a lack of nearly everything: food, fuel, clothing, blankets, soap, light. Famine was at hand, and in some cases already existed. At that moment we were powerless to do anything.

Needless to say, this made us deeply miserable; but it did

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not mean that there was nothing we could do. We considered it our imperative duty to inform people in Europe and abroad of the distress of the Netherlands, and we had to revise our plans for help after the liberation in the light of the new situation. New agreements had to be made, and we consulted with S.H.A.E.F. in Brussels. Gerbrandy, the supply services, Bernhard—who was influential both as a commander and as a person—and many others exerted themselves. Juliana and I were constantly on the telephone, urging people to make haste. Juliana exerted herself particularly on behalf of the young children, many of whom were condemned to death if no special measures were taken.

The result of our efforts was that many people began to understand how urgent the requirements were. One of our happy achievements was that Sweden sent bread to Holland. We still remember this with gratitude.

Juliana often went on visits to the wounded, in London as well as in outlying parts of the United Kingdom, sometimes staying away for several days. In the course of her visits she studied new methods of treatment of war victims. She also visited many other Dutch people and gave special attention to children.

I myself also went to hospitals, but I could not stay away from London for long. On my visits I satisfied myself as to the good care given to our wounded by doctors and nurses.

On the 28th of November I said in a broadcast speech:

Fellow-countrymen,

I want to say a few words to you in these anxious days, while we are waiting for the liberation of our whole country—now that distress has mounted to heights and destruction has assumed proportions that none of us could ever have imagined.

In the first place I address myself to you who are still living under the sway of the oppressor and in particular to our railway workers, who are fulfilling their patriotic duty admirably, with true selflessness, heedless of the dangers to themselves and their families. You have set an example of common determination such as we have seen and are

still seeing from our heroes of the resistance movement, an example that will continue to inspire our whole people in these dark days which demand the utmost of its spirit of solidarity and co-operation.

Fellow-countrymen in the occupied fatherland,

You are aware of my great confidence in the resistance of our whole people. Continue working in unity, as you have done hitherto. Help each other, and go on helping. We know your deprivation, everything is being done to provide you with supplies of food and other necessities after the liberation. We have supplies at our disposal, but the problem is how to bring them to you now that the means of transport that remain in western Europe, after the damage done by the war and the wilful destruction caused by the enemy and his thefts of rolling-stock, are largely used for military supplies. It is our fervent hope that all these problems will be overcome. . . .

In the midst of this distress Christmas came again. Juliana and I were alone at Laneswood, without Bernhard, who could seldom get away from his headquarters and then only for half-days, and without the children who were still in Ottawa. But far worse than all this was our oppressive anxiety caused by the tragic conditions in the north of our country and the stalemate at the front in the south. In those days and in the months that followed I asked myself every morning when I opened my eyes: 'How am I to get through this day?'; 'What news will I receive today, once again worse than yesterday?'; 'Why should there be another of those terrible days?' And yet—I knew I had to persevere till the bitter end.

The news from home grew worse all the time. In sight of his defeat, the enemy was crueller than ever. One firing squad after another was formed, one vile murder after another committed, the prisons that had been full began to overflow. The lowest point was reached in Putten, which became a village of widows through the criminal action of the occupying power, who dragged away the men and burned down many of their houses.

Then there was another sword, hunger, which did increasing harm. Before our mind's eye we saw the hunger-tours, those caravans of starving people who went into the country to obtain something for their families.

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Indescribable distress had become the lot of the Netherlands, appearing more heart-rendingly than ever when the dead who could no longer be buried were stacked up in the Zuiderkerk in Amsterdam.

What a miserable Christmas it was. We sat together round a tiny Christmas tree with but a single candle and imagined all this happening at home. There was room for nothing else in our hearts and thoughts.

In my broadcast on Christmas Day I said:

The message of Christmas is not an appalling contrast to our present condition and our nameless suffering; the unfathomable and consoling love of Christ is there because of that suffering. Now that everything threatens to disappear and perish, it provides the only firm foothold among the shifting sands of the times. It enables us to maintain a courageous and convinced refusal in the face of the powers that threaten us with destruction, supported by God's supreme affirmation of life as it is laid down in this message; it confirms to us the eternal and imperishable existence of the 'Life' and the 'Light of the world', that St John mentions in his gospel. The coming of that life, of that light in this world, means the fulfilment of God's promise to regenerate mankind. It is in Bethlehem that we all meet; that we all become conscious of the love that embraces and unites us all, as well as of the love for our fellow-men. That is where we learn what vocation means in our work, in our common effort for one supreme purpose; and it is where we see more clearly than anywhere else the need to put our success in this effort and the achievement of that purpose above everything else.

Christmas is the feast of promise: one of the things it promises us is a better future, which we may hope and expect to begin soon. This future will be founded to a large extent on our close co-operation in the spirit I just described. Nothing could be a better preparation for it than the Christmas message.

It would show a lack of reverence to conclude with prayer in these circumstances, over the radio, and yet, while we can think of nothing but the nameless distress of our people, our thoughts often pass into prayer unnoticed. God only knows how many hands are folded, certainly a great many more than we think. I feel united with you in spirit, remembering all the deported men and all those who are sighing in prisons and torture camps, all mothers and children and all the others

who suffer from hunger and cold, all the weak and the sick, our heroes of the resistance, our forces on land, at sea and in the air, our merchant seamen and fishermen and the severely tried members of the empire in the tropics. May God's blessing be with you, wherever you are.

Juliana stayed with me until January, when she left for the United States in order to inform President Roosevelt in my name of the nearly desperate condition of our people in occupied territory. Having completed this mission she then returned to her children. In early April she came back to England for the final stages of the liberation.

At that time many V2's were dropping on London; the nearest they ever came to us was five to seven miles away, but even then the house trembled and we heard a loud blast.

In the course of January 1945 I received the cabinet's resignation. The cabinet crisis was not easy to solve at that moment, for several obvious reasons, not the least of which was the lack of persons of ministerial stature abroad.

The outgoing government had been formed in 1939; at least, it had for the most part remained unchanged in its composition and programme, in spite of a change of premier and of a few other ministers. Not surprisingly, this lifespan had proved too long for sustained strength and homogeneity, and there had been an overwhelming multitude of increasingly complicated problems. I am thinking in particular of the problems that arose in the south after the liberation and that demanded quick practical attention, attuned to the mentality formed during the occupation. However strong might be the desire to refrain from measures that would compromise the future, there were times when it was impossible not to intervene.

In view of the development of the nation during the war, such matters could only be settled satisfactorily by people with a close personal experience of the years of occupation. The best solution of the crisis seemed to lie in the formation of a provisional government, which would exercise its functions until the complete liberation of the Netherlands had been accomplished. Gerbrandy would continue as Prime Minister and the others should be personalities from

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the southern provinces and a few members of the outgoing cabinet.

I was still waiting to hear from Bernhard that the journey of the delegation from the three southern provinces had been arranged, and when they would arrive in London. At last I received the good news that everything was ready. Meanwhile I still had the government's resignation on my hands, for which no solution had been found. The visit was particularly important at this moment, because it would give me and Gerbrandy the opportunity to find out more about the political atmosphere in the southern provinces. Moreover, if persons of ministerial stature were included in the group, Gerbrandy could approach them there and then. Fortunately this turned out to be the case.

Apart from this secondary significance of the visit, the information I received was extremely useful to me. The group spent a long week-end with me at Stubbings, most of them staying the night. We had our meals together and ample opportunity for discussion, in groups or privately.

The arrangements at Stubbings were makeshift, as regards living space and meals. Fortunately, although food was scarce in England, my guests could at least eat more than they were used to at home. On one of the days they met Gerbrandy for luncheon in London, and told him all he wanted to know.

On the 24th of February 1945 I addressed the Dutch people in the customary way with the following words:

Let me begin by reading to you a poem many of you know, because it expresses so well what lives in all of us:

But if I live to see the liberation
And cheer the victory parade,
God, tell me that this suffering,
This sorrow shall not be betrayed.

And resurrect this nation, finer, wiser,
Than when it went to meet its fate,
That we may as free men on earth
Direct our gaze towards Thy state!

Because by then this land's horizons
Will bathe in Thy eternal light,
Because this soil with blood is hallowed
Shed by Thy martyrs in their fight. . . .

Leave but this land to them forever,
Let us receive it by their hand!
Make only what their pains acquired
Return to be our Fatherland!

Not only is it our bounden duty, but there is burning inside us, a sacred fire compelling us to achieve the fulfilment of the poet's prayer. A fire that will allow no delay in the making of preparations.

Our liberation is coming about in a different way from what we had imagined.

The war has established a temporary frontier along our rivers, thus creating a division of our people, who all during the cruel days of the occupation shared the same fate and were so closely united in joys and sorrows and still are, more than ever before, spiritually one and indivisible.

Whereas all of you north of our rivers are still subjected to the criminal regime of the enemy, who does not even shrink from inflicting starvation upon you, those of you who are already liberated have experienced all the horrors and destruction of war on your own soil, and you have come to know only too well what it means to be in what the soldier calls an operational area, and you are still waiting for the fulfilment of the wishes and ideas which have sprung up during the years of oppression.

Those who can see deeper than the surface realize at once that the interests of the occupied and liberated Netherlands are identical.

This being so, we as a nation would show bad faith towards the many who sacrificed themselves, going through tortures and suffering in silence, as well as towards our most fervent desire, if we did not set to work, even now, to prepare the new era of our national existence and to pave the way for the times that will follow immediately upon the liberation of our entire people. We must liberate ourselves, as far as possible, not least in the spiritual sense.

In the recently completed reconstruction of the cabinet, this need was taken into account.

I am happy to see that men who are supported by the confidence of the liberated provinces have been found willing to join this cabinet.

In the execution of its difficult task the cabinet will most carefully

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avoid any measures which require the approval of the nation as a whole. Its duties will come to an end with the liberation of our country. At that moment I hope to arrange for the formation of a cabinet consisting of persons who enjoy the confidence of my whole people. In anticipation of general elections, as I said on the 10th of May last year, an emergency parliament will be called as soon as possible.

The utmost effort will be made to provide help and a satisfactory food supply for those parts of the Netherlands and the empire that are still awaiting their liberation, and to improve conditions in the liberated areas.

Urged on by my awareness of the need to do all we can to convince our allies of the distress inflicted upon the Netherlands by our ruthless enemies, I have recently followed up many other steps already made by my ministers and myself and informed the King of England and the President of the United States personally of all this, at the same time asking them for the early and effective assistance which is imperatively required to save the situation. On the foundations of love, justice and truth, we shall work to create the national community whose image lives in us all.

The promising outlook for the war in the Far East should act as a spur to our preparations for taking part in the liberation of the Netherlands East Indies.

It gives me genuine satisfaction to see that so many young people volunteer for this enterprise. I am filled with justifiable pride by the selflessness and courage they show for the liberation of the fatherland and of the greater Netherlands in the tropics.

Fellow-countrymen, I call on all of you who are liberated, and not least on the young, to prepare together with my ministers and myself the resurrection of the whole of the Netherlands territory and of the Netherlands East Indies, for I am convinced that thus we shall do all we can for our oppressed countrymen and the members of the empire.

Unite around your government, which will lead the way. And now, onward.

Long live the fatherland.

Long live the empire.

Circumstances had necessitated an execution in two stages of our original project, based on the assumption of a complete liberation, to form a cabinet of people who had spent the war in the Netherlands, immediately after the liberation. Or, to put it differently, part of the original plan had to be advanced.

A moment came when it was possible for King George to visit the Allied troops in our liberated south, whose headquarters were at Eindhoven. The news was the more interesting as it seemed to indicate that a short visit from me should also be possible in the near future. I had to proceed warily in this matter, so as to avoid the embarrassment of a reply to the effect that in the view of H.Q. the time had not yet come for me to visit the Netherlands. I had to put out a feeler before doing anything official. Fortunately this led to an assurance that an official request would be favourably received. The request followed at once: I asked to be allowed to pay a short visit to the three liberated provinces. Then we had to make our preparations, which of course took a little time.

Before I describe this tour there is something else I want to explain. Among the many people sent to London by Bernhard, to give information to me and to the ministers, there had been a Protestant and a Roman Catholic army chaplain of the B.S. The former arrived just as I began to prepare my tour, as if he had known about it.

I knew that I would meet prominent personages of the I.K.O. (Inter-Church Consultation) on my tour, including members of the provisional Synod of the Dutch Reformed Church. I was fully informed of the attitude of the churches towards the occupying power and of their co-operation; but from a distance I had not been able to acquire an inside understanding of the situation, after the radical changes that had occurred in the relations between the churches and in their approach to spiritual matters generally. My information had to be completed through conversations with people who stood at the heart of the nation's spiritual life. Reports alone were not sufficient; a living picture of the spiritual growth of the Netherlands could only come from personal contact. I derived great profit from the exploratory talks I had before I went and saw for myself.

To prepare my tour I had requests sent out to three personages, one in each province, to draw up a plan which should then be passed on to the G.H.Q. in our country; the Allied military authorities had to take the necessary

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measures, for there was one thing I should never forget: I was the guest of the authorities. Strange situation: to be on Dutch soil without ruling! The territory had not yet been transferred to the constitutional authorities. The Allied authorities discharged their task with admirable tact and hospitality; there was nothing strained about my return under their auspices.

I decided to accept a long-standing invitation from Queen Elisabeth, the widow of King Albert of Belgium who had become famous in the First World War, and to visit her on my way to the Netherlands. This had the advantage that I would arrive at an airfield not far from our frontier and that by leaving Laeken early the next morning I would have a whole day in front of me.

It was a sad meeting with the Queen and Prince Charles in Brussels, usually so gay and active. The war had brought business life to a standstill and had a depressing influence generally, and the fact that the King and his whole family had been taken to an unknown destination as prisoners had made a deep impression. Prince Charles had just been appointed Regent.

As for my tour, it was different from any of my previous tours in its complete lack of luxury. I was accompanied by Baron Baud, my daughter's private secretary, an ex-hostage of the Germans who had reported to her and whom she had put at my disposal for this occasion. He was made a colonel for the duration of the tour. For personal services I had a sergeant of my guard. Nobody else travelled with me, although Mrs Verbrugge was with me at Anneville, the headquarters of the B.S. Our luggage was extremely restricted.

The programme for Zealand had been composed by Jonkheer de Casembroot, provincial deputy and former burgomaster of Westkapelle, a prominent member of the resistance. He and the Queen's Commissioner accompanied me in their province. The plan for Brabant was the work of Mr Beel of Eindhoven, who had just been appointed Minister of the Interior. In his province, he and the acting Queen's Commissioner accompanied me, and in Limburg, the third of the southern provinces, my company was made up of Mr Wijffels,

the new Minister for Social Affairs who had prepared the programme, and the Queen's Commissioner.

The British military authorities had put a shell-proof car at my disposal and supplied us with army rations. Strict secrecy as regards the route we were to follow and the towns I would visit had been imposed upon ourselves as well as upon the British military authorities and all the Dutch people I was going to meet.

We arrived at the Dutch frontier near Eede on the morning of March 13th. I crossed it on foot.

After a moving welcome we drove on into the Netherlands. Wherever I went, the same emotion and enthusiasm. Everywhere flowers, presents and all sorts of attentions. In every town and village resistance workers and widows and children of fallen underground fighters were presented to me at my special request. I inspected all the units of the B.S. which were on duty on my way or which had been specially summoned to meet me; and I always spoke to some of the men. Officers of M.G. and civilian authorities reported in many places.

We made a long tour by car through Zeeland Flanders, ending at Sluiskil. On the way we ate our rations at the home of Mr Meijs, notary in Oostburg. The reader will easily understand the great joy it gave us to share them with our host and hostess.

We had dinner at the headquarters of the Dutch Naval Commander Southern Sector in Sluiskil, and we spent the night there. Early the next morning we set out on our tour of the eastern half of Zeeland Flanders.

On the way we stopped near a bridge where the enemy had executed some of our boys not long before. I took the marguerite I wore on my coat and laid it at the spot where these heroes had fallen.

It is clearly impossible for me to mention all the places I visited; the reader will forgive me if I single out a few instances at random.

We visited Hulst and had our lunch at the old town hall. The resistance leaders present in the square outside were invited to join us with their wives. Fortunately the rations were ample and there was enough bread and coffee for

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everyone; the burgomaster treated us to apples from his garden. This meal was known as the heroes' luncheon.

After this visit I went to Anneville via Belgian territory. On Sunday I visited Breda and attended my first religious service in the Netherlands after five years.

On one of the following days I met a large group of dignitaries and private persons at Breda town hall. They included the Bishop of Breda,—I always received the spiritual authorities—General Maczek, commanding the Polish division which had liberated Breda, and many resistance fighters and war victims.

Then back from Breda to Zeeland, where receptions of resistance fighters and war victims awaited me at Flushing and Middelburg.

The next day we left flooded Middelburg by 'DUKW' to visit Westkapelle and several villages on the way. I could now see for myself the catastrophic results Westkapelle had suffered from the bombing of the dike by the Allies. I was particularly affected by the account of a tragic drama in the mill: without any hope of assistance those inside it had watched the water mount higher and higher until in the end it carried them all away.

It was a cold, unforgettable journey. How tragic was the aspect offered by the Isle of Walcheren, once so picturesque: a surface of water as far as the eye could reach, with church spires and roofs rising out of it, and trees that would never put forth leaves again.

The next day we returned to Anneville, by way of Veere, Goes, Berg-op-Zoom and Roosendaal. Everywhere the same emotion of the crowds who had flocked together, and meetings with resistance workers and widows and children of men who had given their lives for the great cause. My deepest feelings were always for them.

Yet every town and district had its own distinctive character, and different branches of the resistance were prominent in different places, to which should be added the diversity of experiences of the people I met.

I went on several tours from Anneville, including one to Tilburg. My experience of the V2's was much more intense

here than in England: they came over in great numbers on their way to Antwerp and even at night we heard them every five to ten minutes.

During my visit to the east of the province of North-Brabant I enjoyed the generous hospitality of Jonkheer Smits van Oyen, the acting Queen's Commissioner. I visited Eindhoven and Bois-le-Duc from his country-house. On my visit to the latter town I also received a deputation from Nijmegen, which the British authorities considered too close to the front for me to visit. Shortly after my departure the town was once again shelled.

At Mr Smits van Oyen's home I received a delegation of the I.K.O., composed of members of all churches. In a short speech I expressed my pleasure at their unity and their common action against injustice under the occupation.

Quite unexpectedly, a woman who had just crossed the lines from the north was presented to me by a resistance leader. She was a very brave person, who had seen a great deal of the suffering and distress in the occupied areas.

We passed through Belgian territory again on our way to Maastricht, where I stayed with the Queen's Commissioner.

Here an old custom was revived: the reception at the town hall, with thousands cheering in the square outside.

I also visited the mining district, notably the town of Heerlen. Coal production was an urgent problem at that time, when we were entirely dependent on our own output: it was in the interest of all that as much coal as possible should be brought to the surface. I made an urgent appeal to the miners to spare no effort now that the national interest was at stake. Their reply left no doubt of their good will.

On the last day of my tour I visited Roermond and Venlo, where many people from the surrounding villages had gathered. In spite of the forced evacuation to Friesland there were large crowds. I need not recall how heavily the Meuse valley had been hit by the war, and how many victims had fallen there.

In the badly damaged town of Venlo resistance men and widows and children as well as civilian wounded were awaiting me in front of the town hall.

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On the airfield near Venlo—I do not remember if it was on our side or the German side of the frontier—I met my son-in-law and Mrs Verbrugge. I left in a navy Dakota, escorted by twelve Spitfires; those unforgettable days belonged to the past. The secrecy had been observed so scrupulously that my car was not waiting for me when we arrived in England. The Americans at the airfield not far from Laneswood kindly put a jeep at our disposal which took us home.

All those busy, happy days had demanded more of me than a human being can give, spiritually and physically; and every morning and every evening I had had to pack and unpack my own things, as there was nobody who could do it for me.

I returned to Mortimer radiant and grateful, but exhausted. During the last days of my tour I was bothered by sciatica, in consequence of all the excitements of my return, which I could not work off by giving rein to my feelings like my compatriots. I had to be ready all the time and show my sympathy to all; this is possible only when one has one's emotions under complete control.

A period of rest, consisting of undisturbed work in my room and relaxation on the sofa, soon had the better of pain and fatigue and presently I could go to London again.

From London we could follow many developments in the fatherland, but one important aspect was hidden from our view. We could not observe the collapse of the enemy's morale. We knew that it was inevitable in view of his critical military situation and the advance of the Allied armies, but as to its extent we could only guess. We kept asking ourselves when it would be completed all along the line; even insiders did not hazard a prophecy. Some thought it could not last more than a month, but nobody knew. How tantalizingly the days crept by!

A certain measure of concentration had been achieved by the resistance organizations with a view to obtaining greater efficiency in resistance action. During the first half of 1944 a new incentive to co-operate was added to this. Encouraged

by London, the organizations began to consider plans for the period after the liberation. This produced the Great Advisory Committee of the Resistance, which met in three separate sections while the war lasted. There was a contact commission consisting of representatives of each section and a delegate of the National Committee set up by the pre-war political parties, which handled all affairs concerning the resistance movement in its role both in the present and after the liberation.

Radio consultations between London and the Netherlands had taken place, serving to inform us of the ideas held at home about what should be done immediately after the liberation. In the end these had led to a proposal for a college of 'confidential counsellors', who would fill up the 'vacuum', as the proposal put it, after the liberation; it included suggestions for the composition of the body. The counsellors should be empowered by London to take the measures necessary for the maintenance of law and order and for setting the national, provincial and local civil services in motion again. It was a well-thought-out proposal which we accepted, together with the list of members suggested.

The final composition of the body was: Mr Bosch van Rosenthal, Professor Cleveringa, Mr Drees, Mr Cramer, Mr Van Sonsbeeck, Mr Neher, Mr Van der Gaag, Professor Oranje, Father Dr Stokman. Of course these plans had been prepared with a liberation of the entire territory in mind, for at that moment there was no question of a partial liberation. Later when the proposal was accepted the distinction was clearly established.

The confidential counsellors actually took up their office after the liberation, although there was no vacuum, for I returned just before the signing of the armistice between ourselves and Germany, and the cabinet was 'on the way'; there was only considerable confusion in the liberated north. Their field of activity, however, was extremely restricted, for many of the duties assigned to them were carried out by M.G., whose creation had necessitated radical changes in our plans.

The events succeeded each other rapidly. We received reports of incidents with Russians on the Isle of Texel, and

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delegates from the population of the island came to London to consult us and to ask for help, which the Allies were unable to provide at that moment.

Soon after this we heard that Mr Neher and Mr Van der Gaag were on their way to London, with the enemy's permission, in order to discuss an armistice which would make it possible to give help to the Dutch people of the occupied provinces in their extreme need.

On reception of this news I went to London. Juliana and I installed ourselves at Chester Square, so as to be available at any moment of the day or night and lose no time when important decisions would have to be taken. I never left the house except for short walks round the Square.

Conditions in the western provinces of Holland were growing worse by the day. The Germans flooded the Wieringermeer Polder, thus cutting off Amsterdam's last food supplies. It was far from certain whether the Germans would keep any of their promises, but the stocks of food had dwindled to the absolute minimum.

The final decision rested with the Allies. They took a long time. Meanwhile Mr Neher and Mr Van der Gaag were staying with us. They always had their meals with us and told us about all that happened in the occupied areas. It gave us great satisfaction to offer them our fare, which although far from luxurious was a genuine treat for them.

At last the decision was taken.

Like people at home, we were overjoyed when the Allies began their dropping of food supplies for the starving Netherlands.

During those days I approached the British government with a request to let me know when I could return to the Netherlands with my government. I considered it necessary that I should be in the Netherlands at the time of the enemy's withdrawal, so as to assume my task at once. We insisted that we should be allowed to return as soon as possible. When I had received the reply I chose Juliana's birthday, the 30th of April, as the date for our return. I wanted to arrive home with her on that day as a surprise.

On the 30th everything was ready for our departure when the news came from the airfield that flying was impossible. The journey had to be postponed until the 2nd of May, when the weather had improved. What an unforgettable journey it was! Our exile had come to an end, Juliana and I returned home.

Having reached the end of my description of the war period, I do not intend to go into the politics of the following years. Although it was not possible to leave war and politics out of a discussion of the years of the occupation, at this point everything pleads in favour of a return to the principle I observed in my discussion of pre-war days.

Another argument for this is that the events are too recent to permit a mature judgment at this moment. If there ever was a period of which this could be said, it is certainly true of that following the Second World War, which is still in a turmoil and will continue to be so for some time to come. I shall therefore confine myself to facts, and mention even those only when I have to. I do not feel obliged to give an extensive picture of our policy for spiritual and material reconstruction, or of the resurrection of the Netherlands after the years of confusion.

There is only one thing I feel I must say: neither the nation itself during the occupation nor I in England could imagine what would be left of our country and people after the war. We could not have suspected how widespread the destruction would be at the end of the struggle, and how tired and physically weakened and in what psychological condition our people would return to freedom.

Whether at home or in London, we were all faced with an insoluble problem. Without even knowing this we had applied ourselves to the preparation of plans and the building-up of a picture, and these were in accordance with each other. But we had not been able to reckon with the desolate reality. Does this not make it understandable that much disappointment was in store for us? That many things did not go as we had hoped and expected? That promising plans were not carried out? That the de-nazification did not do all we had

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hoped and that many of the 'old' things came back? Above all: that, although the vision of a liberated, resurrected nation was realized, it was not that better country that the resistance heroes had seen in their mind's eye when they went to meet their death?

Here I address all those who shared so deeply in their suffering and who knew what inspired their martyrdom and struggle. Rest assured that the high spiritual values—liberty, justice, love of mankind and respect for man's dignity and value—which were the foundations of the resistance movement and which revealed themselves in all the varied forms it adopted, will remain an everlasting treasure for our people; that they remain as it were in storage to inspire our people once again if circumstances should demand it.

We are at a turning-point in the history of mankind and no one can say how many more changes will occur. There may come a new development which is still hidden from our view. It would be a sign of short-sighted gloom if we despaired of the realization of the vision your dear ones took with them into the grave.

He who led us through the dark valley of anxiety and oppression to the freedom and the space in which we can be ourselves again is able to realize the vision of a better future that our fallen fighters had in our earthly existence in His time and in His way. We must be patient, for he that believeth shall not make haste, and history tells us that pioneers are sometimes far in advance of their time.

Is there not visible around us a budding interest in the regeneration of individual and community in the spirit of Christ, as an indication of that new reality to come? All will depend on that regeneration, as God's breath is longer than ours.

It is no wishful thinking when we persist in our confidence in that finer, better nation that seemed round the corner at the liberation; we are not led by something we would like to be true, but by a profound experience of God's Guidance of people and nations. All those who have had that revelation and experience will agree.

Now that I have passed in review the years of oppression and struggle, I want to end with an expression of gratitude to all those, whatever their circumstances and wherever they were, who gave the best they had or who suffered heavily and are still suffering for the sublime cause, of gratitude to our resistance heroes and all their brave comrades outside the Netherlands who shared in their struggle and their aspirations.

We shall never forget your deeds of courage and self-sacrifice.

7. *The Liberation and After*

I LEFT LANESWOOD with the same little suitcase I had carried when I arrived in Harwich five years before; my other things were to be sent later.

A woman *Engelandvaarder* had gone on ahead of us to arrange our accommodation; she was the only person there when we arrived at Anneville. Two *Engelandvaarders* who had been found willing to assist us accompanied us on the plane, while Baron Baud, who had already left for Holland, would be at Juliana's disposal.

We drove straight to Anneville, which had been vacated by the staff of our armed forces who had crossed the rivers to settle at Spelderholt and Het Loo. The house having been requisitioned, Juliana and I could install ourselves immediately.

We had not yet recovered from the first emotions of our homecoming when on the 4th of May the news came that the armistice had been signed. We had just finished dinner and I had retired to the drawing-room to do a little more work when Tazelaar, one of the *Engelandvaarders*, came dashing into the room and nearly speechless with emotion only just managed to say: 'The armistice has been signed, it's peace!' What a sensation, what an indescribable burden was lifted

off me at that moment. At last we could breathe freely again! We could live as normal people again, without all the worries of the last years. And, most important of all, the oppression and the distress of our people had ended.

After only two days to adapt ourselves to the situation we found on our return the position had changed again, and we had to deal with a liberated people who were going to live in peace. Of course I would have followed my first impulse and rushed to the part of the country that in my eyes was once again open to me, if I had not been prevented by the Allied and Dutch security services, who considered it necessary to organize a provisional round-up of dangerous elements first. There might be Germans and Dutch nazis hidden in the liberated area, so I had to be patient. Moreover, road traffic was still subject to severe restrictions. The roads were needed for military transport and civilians could use them only to a limited extent, if at all.

It was a very busy time. Everywhere we went enthusiastic demonstrations were spontaneously organized; people marched past our residence or the town hall, and expressed their joy in many ways.

We also received many visits from people who had undertaken the laborious journey across the rivers, from those who had come out of prisons and concentration camps, from underground workers and from members of my household who reported for duty. We were shocked to detect the signs of hunger at every encounter. What a number of emaciated faces we saw! But in many cases it was not only hunger that had marked the faces of our visitors; it was also the spiritual distress they had suffered.

Yet those who had been worst hit did not even come; they were in bed, suffering from the serious consequences of all they had been through, hunger oedema and general weakness.

The day was much too short! In between I went to Eindhoven, to address my countrymen over the radio—once again from Dutch soil.

Juliana stood by me in those days and at the same time had her own task; she had resumed her work as president of the

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Netherlands Red Cross and there was a new organization, Nederlands Volksherstel (Netherlands National Reconstruction), which demanded her attention.

At the same time we had to organize our daily life and I had to set up the services which were indispensable for the execution of my task.

A flood of letters began to arrive, which had to be sorted out and answered with care; special assistants had to be engaged for that job. It should be realized that the pre-war organization around me had ceased to exist and that the members of my old entourage and the servants were nowhere to be found. While on the one hand this made it easier for me to do things in a new way, it also meant that I was entirely without help when I arrived.

During the first days we were still practically cut off from the north; the journey took a long time and those who came to see me met many obstacles on their way to Breda.

This also meant that I could not immediately see the men I had to consult about the formation of a new cabinet (Gerbrandy's government tendered its resignation at the moment of the liberation). It was only a matter of a few days, but even then I could not get hold of the *traditional* counsellors at times of government crises.

Like everything else, the political structure was totally disrupted. I therefore consulted people of different parties and different convictions, who gave me an entirely fresh impression of the mood of the country. After due deliberation, and several conferences with Mr Schermerhorn and Mr Drees, I decided that the best solution would be to invite them to form a national cabinet of recovery and reconstruction.

Gerbrandy's interim government had done what it could to set things in motion and had shown great enterprise in the use of the limited means at its disposal. It had the advantage that most of its members were fully informed about the conditions in the liberated provinces and could therefore take the right measures.

As a government based on a parliamentary majority was impossible while parliament was not functioning, and therefore no political machinery could be used, the answer seemed

to me to lie in a government whose composition and programme guaranteed a democratic policy, in accordance with the constitution and the ideas existing among the people. This left the door open for innovations without in any way prejudicing the course that would be followed once the constitutional machinery had been re-established. So this was the long-awaited pull of the handle that would set the nation in motion again in a balanced, responsible way.

The reader should try to imagine the state of disruption that the new cabinet found in every field. The administration, like for instance the population registers, was in complete disorder. Resistance workers had destroyed much data to protect people and in this field as in others the Germans left a chaos behind them. Many people were missing, executed or deported. The vacancies had to be filled without delay. In industry and agriculture machines and raw materials were lacking, in consequence of the enemy's robbery, and deportations had caused a grave shortage of workers. The authorities and the nation shared the tremendous task and responsibility of setting the country on its feet again. Our people showed exemplary discipline in those days and gave their full co-operation. I myself had many conferences with representatives of all groups and all classes of society.

Another of my duties was to compose an entourage in keeping with the changed times, in other words, to surround myself with people who had taken part in the resistance or who had been *Engelandvaarders*—'nobles' in the best sense of the word. Only a few of those who had belonged to my entourage before the war were re-engaged for active duty. My private secretariat, which was run by a temporary staff of volunteers, had to be placed on a permanent footing; I divided the functions and appointed two secretaries, Miss Geldens, who had taken part in the resistance in the southern provinces, and Mr M. Kohnstamm, who had been prominent in the student resistance movement. Both were in entire sympathy with the idea of regeneration.

A little later Mrs de Beaufort, who had been a mother to many resistance workers, became my companion and *dame du palais*. She was to share my joys and sorrows for the next

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seven years, and she rendered me great services. After her death her place was taken by Mrs de Savornin Lohman, who has been my faithful helper ever since. I engaged several other people as well.

Now and then I managed to find time for visits to towns in the south, where traffic conditions were more like normal by now. One of these visits took us to Heusden, where a hundred and thirty-four people who had sought refuge in the town hall had died when the Germans blew up the building. I included as many as possible of the towns that had been left out of my programme in March, giving preference to those that had suffered most. We also attended a thanksgiving service for the liberation in the Roman Catholic church of Breda. On Sundays we went to the Protestant churches of Breda or Ulvenhout.

When it became possible to visit the Arnhem area, I went there at once. It was a sad return. What deep marks the scourge of war had left here, and what sacrifices had been made!

I visited the places where the fighting had been heaviest, and was warmly welcomed everywhere. These were not like peace-time visits: they were largely improvised, and we used the strangest collection of cars of various colours and models. Of course my cars had been stolen by the enemy, so we relied largely on borrowed vehicles. However, Juliana and I each had our own chauffeur; both had reported for duty immediately after our return.

It was not until the middle of June that we were told that the original objections had been removed against my return to the northern provinces. Much as I had looked forward to this moment, I did not find it easy to leave Brabant, where we had known so much kindness and friendship and had seen so many important days.

Juliana and I decided to give a farewell party for the people of our neighbourhood. There would be dancing in the open air if the weather permitted, and indoors in case of rain. The party was a big success, in the best jovial spirit of Brabant, and young and old, Juliana not excepted, joined in when the local musicians played the dance tunes they all loved.

Juliana then went to Canada, to take her children back to England via New York; she left them at Stubbings for a short period, until the palace at Soestdijk had been prepared for them. Fortunately it did not take very long, soon the children came home.

I went to Apeldoorn and installed myself in one of my houses in the Waldeck Pyrmontlaan. It was only much later that I could return to Het Loo, which had been requisitioned by the H.Q. of the Netherlands armed forces.

At my house in Apeldoorn I could have regular contact with the ministers. I received resistance workers and many others, in groups as large as my modest lodgings would permit. Of course I was told many details of the liberation of Apeldoorn and other towns.

I visited the unhappy widows' village of Putten, and met the few survivors from the concentration camp who had just returned and who had suffered so much that it was doubtful whether they would live. To make matters worse there was a shortage of the food they needed most: jam.

Soon after, I passed unforgettable moments when I saw Amsterdam, The Hague and Rotterdam again. It struck me that apart from looking undernourished people were also still visibly tense and nervous. That also went to show how many trials they had endured. It took months for people to recover their former balance and calm.

My life in Apeldoorn began to get organized, to the benefit of my work in the first place. To my great dismay and disappointment it was then interrupted by an indisposition. The strain of my busy life caused bronchitis, which had to run its course, and it was a long time before I had fully recovered. I particularly disliked the enforced idleness and the weakness afterwards. When I could spend a few hours out of bed Juliana came with the children; that was a great joy. Juliana installed herself at Soestdijk with them, and began to look round for schools for the two eldest. Bernhard still divided his time between Spelderholt and Het Loo.

When I had recovered, I was seized with a longing to go and work in The Hague or near-by. It seemed to me, however, that the time had not yet come to install myself at the Noordeinde.

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This was not only because of the contrast that my residence there, in that large space with so many servants, would form with the miseries of our people; I also feared that the stately surroundings of the palace might upset the sincere and informal relations that had developed so happily during the war. In simple lodgings I hoped that the informality and sincerity could be preserved. I was happy to find that I had not been mistaken.

Afterwards, when I had to return to the palaces, it turned out that even there the gains need not be lost. Of course I continued to live simply; the old ceremonial was not revived.

I found two villas in Scheveningen, one for the work which had to be done by my entourage, another for my personal use. Early in September I moved. The houses were pleasantly situated and seemed sufficiently spacious, and the sea air was wonderful. In the long run, however, they became too small for all my work and my papers, and I was glad when I could return to Het Loo the following spring.

Soon after I had installed myself in Scheveningen the opening of the provisional States-General took place. The procession was adapted to the times. We went by car; all our horses had been stolen by the enemy. The car was escorted by the B.S. in dark-blue overalls, and the units of the army, navy and air force were in battle-dress. In my view it was the most beautiful opening of the States-General ever. But I seem to be virtually alone in that opinion.

The solution for the transition to normal parliamentary conditions had been found in an elimination of those members of the States-General who had had associations with the enemy and who therefore could no longer have a seat in Parliament. The two chambers were reinforced with members 'to be appointed by the Crown'. These were all prominent representatives of the resistance, which could thus express its wishes and make its influence felt.

The general disruption had made it impossible to hold elections immediately after the liberation, as would have been desirable otherwise. This would have enabled the early formation of a government based on a parliamentary majority.

On the 15th of August 1945 Japan capitulated.

During the first winter after my return to the Netherlands Mrs Marsman regularly invited artists to tea with me. They read from their work or told me about it. In this way I met writers, painters, sculptors, architects and musicians. The meetings, which were the continuation of my receptions at Stubbings, were held regularly every winter until my abdication.

I saw many compatriots and foreign visitors, people of all professions and from all walks of life. It was a source of satisfaction for me to observe that my visitors always felt at ease in my pleasant villa.

At Stubbings and at Laneswood I had had a modest corner for my painting, to which I retired from time to time to devote myself to art and think about something else for a few moments. When I had arrived in Scheveningen, I furnished my delightful studio at the Huis ten Bosch again, splendidly situated with a large window facing north, and I spent many a Sunday afternoon there.

The elections were not held until April 1946, and they were followed by the formation of a parliamentary cabinet. Although the majority of the parties made an attempt at re-orientation, the hopes and expectations of many people were not fulfilled. Physically weakened and exhausted, the nation preferred the old and the familiar. The plans for reform which had been cherished during the occupation receded into the background.

Nothing more was heard of a constitutional reform based on the ideas expressed during the war, and many other dreams of the years of oppression were forgotten.

When spring came round I had to make my plans for the rest of the year. In the meantime Het Loo had been vacated by the staff of our armed forces; I decided to go there first, although continuing to live in a modest way, and to install myself at the Huis ten Bosch for the following winter.

A new conception was needed for my annual visit to

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Amsterdam. Although a number of changes had been made in the programme, during and after the First World War, the whole thing was not yet in keeping with the times. It took quite an effort of imagination to give it a new and original shape.

In the course of the first annual visit I unveiled the provisional war monument in the Dam, where urns had been placed containing earth from each of the provinces as well as one to commemorate those who had fallen in Indonesia. I inspected the reconstruction work in the harbour and asked many questions about it. It was a long visit, lasting about a fortnight, and much time was spent on personal meetings with people and unofficial walks and drives through the town.

While the official days with their elaborate and carefully prepared programme were important to maintain the link between the capital and the bearer of the Crown, I attached equal importance to the simple daily contacts, which gave us a chance of getting to know each other. How close it brought us to start work together, at the same hour, every day. I saw the procession of workers filing past my window at the very time when my own room was opened for my own work, and during the whole of the working day I shared the life of my fellow-workers. And how important it was that there were private receptions in addition to the official ones, with one group after another telling me about their work over a cup of tea. The visitors included men on sentry duty who had distinguished themselves during the war.

Of course there was ample opportunity for personal talks even at the official receptions.

One day when Mrs de Beaufort and I were taking a walk in the park one of 'her boys' came towards her exclaiming: 'Hallo, Aunt Loekie, how wonderful to see you!' She had lived in Amsterdam during the famine of the last months of the war, and had acted as a mother for many young men in hiding. During that period her own son Binnert fell a victim to the enemy. It was a meeting I shall not easily forget. While she was in Amsterdam with me Mrs de Beaufort had a good opportunity to strengthen her ties with these boys.

All my activity after the liberation was dominated by one

thought: what had been gained in London in the difficult years must remain. The fraternal feelings that had grown under the oppression should be tended like a precious plant whenever I met people.

At the time of the February strike in Amsterdam it had occurred to me that the capital should be presented with a lasting memento to this great event. In my mind this took the form of a device: Heroic, Determined, Merciful. The idea was well received. I had a municipal flag designed which carried these words. When it was ready I arranged for it to be hoisted at the palace in Amsterdam by members of the resistance, and then presented it to the city.

It was subsequently learned that Rotterdam would also appreciate a device, to commemorate the bombing by the Germans, the attitude of the people during the war and the destruction of the harbour shortly before the armistice. The words chosen were: Stronger Through Struggle.

Both devices were accorded to the towns by Royal Decree.

I presented Rotterdam with a sculpture for the town hall symbolizing its heroic struggle.

When everything had settled down after the liberation, I could begin to enjoy my life at home and to renew my acquaintance with all the spots that had become so very dear to me. At the Huis ten Bosch, where I spent the winters and enjoyed the flowers of the park in spring, I felt united with the people of The Hague, large numbers of whom entered my island which had become part of the town, and passed in front of my door on their way to the joys of fresh air and sun. It was all very informal. Moreover, it had the advantage that it was easy for people to approach me there, and for me to get hold of them. I shall not easily forget those winters spent in the historic building, surrounded by its art treasures.

Het Loo afforded me no less pleasure, with its unlimited opportunities of living in God's wonderful nature. The Ruygenhoek on the other hand had been rendered uninhabitable by the enemy; it had to be entirely disinfected and refurnished before I could live there again. The residence in these houses benefited my work.

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I shall not bore the reader with a description of my programme during the following years. Apart from the daily duties, there were my 'working visits', which gave me a chance of seeing the real conditions without trimmings, stripped of 'official' truth. I also received people at home, just as I had done in England, except of course that now I had to deal with a people of ten millions, which gave the individual a much smaller chance of being received than he had in London, where we were no more numerous than an average village community.

I also received people from Indonesia and from Surinam and the Dutch Antilles.

On the 4th of February 1947 we were gladdened by the birth of Marijke, my fourth grandchild.

When I studied history, I was particularly struck by the abdication of the Emperor Charles V in 1555. I recognized the wisdom in it. The idea that there was such a thing as abdication was entirely new to me. Of course I went and talked it over with Mother. We considered the matter in all its aspects and went into the consequences a monarch's abdication could have. What interested me then and continued to do so afterwards was the sound idea expressed in it, that one should not continue in an office which requires enterprise, resolution and energy, which has to be supported by complete fitness, when one no longer feels oneself to possess those forces.

Our constitution mentions abdication in Article 15. The element of free will present in my duties in view of this article may well have heightened my sense of responsibility and devotion towards my task.

I mention all this only now, after my description of the Second World War, in order to set the subject in its proper context. During the war of course the question of abdication never entered my thoughts.

Coming back to my starting-point, I want to add that when I grew older I was influenced by the thought that Juliana should not be burdened with responsibility too soon but should have a chance to devote herself to the happiness of her young family without onerous duties.

It was only after the period of transition following the liberation that I felt justified in seriously considering the question of abdication. An incentive was provided by my daily duties, which were more numerous than before the war and left my spirit little or no time for relaxation, which did not help my fitness at moments when special demands were made of me. As I saw it, I had to wait until a few years after the period of transition between the armistice and the return to more settled conditions. This meant that I could terminate my reign in the course of my sixty-seventh or sixty-eighth year.

In 1947 I used my constitutional power to set up a Regency for a short period. Under the terms of the constitution, my daughter was Regent designate. She was sworn in on the 14th of October 1947.

I resumed my functions at the end of the term I had set. Juliana had had the opportunity to get an idea of the task that awaited her.

Slowly we approached my sixty-eighth birthday, which coincided with the fiftieth anniversary of my reign. Large-scale plans were being made to celebrate this jubilee. I did not feel up to that sort of thing any more. I remembered from earlier jubilees that they did not mean just a few days of festivities, but that I would have to attend celebrations in different parts of the country during a whole month. Then there was also a general election that year, so I was already faced with the tension and the fatigue of a cabinet formation. In my opinion there could be no certainty that I would still have the resilience necessary when I had to make difficult decisions. This was a matter that I alone could judge and decide.

In the course of the years I had seen important decisions being made everywhere in the world and in many different fields. It had often struck me that the efficacy of many decisions would have been better assured if they had been made not by persons who were nearing the end of their lives, but by people who were still in their prime.

On no account did I want to give the impression that I was staying on in order to have my jubilee—I who had signed the

law on the retirement age for many of our countrymen, in which the fact had been openly recognized that many old people were no longer what they had been, as far as their powers of work were concerned at least.

I was firmly resolved: retirement before my sixty-eighth birthday. I consulted two intimates who seemed able and suited to help me with the preparations and told them how I had imagined the procedure. To my disappointment they rejected my suggestions in view of the plans for the jubilee and did not even meet my wishes to the extent of making a counter-proposal; they simply refused to assist me in finding a solution at that date, when the plans for the jubilee were already under way.

I had a difficult and even sad time during the following months, when I had to look for a solution all alone, without any assistance. I found it in a second Regency for Juliana, starting in the middle of May, and proposed to resume my office a few days before my sixty-eighth birthday. Immediately after my birthday I would abdicate, thus making it possible for Juliana to be installed at once. The organizers of the jubilee assured me that they would be satisfied as long as I received the expressions of loyalty and devotion of the people of The Hague and made my festive entry into Amsterdam, where a farewell meeting would take place in the Stadium, and that beyond this nothing was expected of me.

The difficult thing now was to inform our people of my intentions, without any preparation. I did this over the radio on the 12th of May, the date of my father's installation in 1849. The whole procedure had the advantage that the new Queen would begin her reign with a government which had been formed on her own initiative.

The play in the Stadium symbolized both my departure and the beginning of the new reign, and was therefore at the same time a welcome addressed to Juliana. I made a farewell speech.

Then came the abdication, on the 4th of September. We and a number of dignitaries took our places at a long table in the Moses Room, following the procedure at my great-

grandfather's abdication.¹ The act of abdication was read by the Director of the Queen's Secretariat and signed by me and then by all the others present. I spoke a few words in general and addressed Juliana in particular.

When we entered we found a somewhat subdued atmosphere, which was however soon improved by my happy and cheerful manner. How numerous were and are my reasons for gratitude, in the first place, my confidence in Juliana's warm feelings for the people we both love so much and in her devotion to the task that was awaiting her and her ability which she had proved on various occasions. Then also the fact that my office was transferred to her during my lifetime and that I might have the opportunity to see something of her reign. Really, there was no room for sadness in my heart. This simple ceremony was a wonderful experience.

The ceremony had been a short one, there was a long time to wait before noon would be announced by the chimes of the palace clock, followed by its twelve powerful strokes. Then the new Queen would appear on the balcony for the first time. We and Bernhard and the children waited breathlessly. A long time passed, and then at last the chimes were heard. When the twelfth stroke had sounded the balcony doors were opened and Juliana and I came forward, hand in hand, followed by Bernhard. One could have heard a pin drop in the Dam at that moment, people were waiting with bated breath. I informed the crowd of my abdication and introduced Juliana to the people of the Netherlands as their Queen, addressed a few words to her and ended by inviting the crowd to acclaim 'long live our Queen', which was done with emotion and enthusiasm. She then said a few words herself, addressing herself to the younger generation in particular, and thanked me for being with her at this moment. After this I withdrew and the four children came forward. Unforgettable moments!

What a joy it was to be present at the Installation in the Nieuwe Kerk on the 6th of September. I had not been told any details of the long preparations, and knew nothing of them. On the day itself I went to say good morning to Juliana when

¹ Translator's note: King William I abdicated in 1840.

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she was nearly ready. All that was missing was the royal mantle with its long train which would hang from her shoulders. She was dressed in dark-blue satin, adorned with the Grand Cross of the Military Order of William, which she wore for the first time in her capacity as Grand Master of the Order. In her hand she held a blue scroll which contained the text of the oath she had to take and her speech, which for the moment remained a secret to me, much as I would have liked to know what it said.

I went to the Nieuwe Kerk accompanied by my two eldest grandchildren and Bernhard's mother. We were seated in the front row to the right of the throne. I had a full view of the door on the side of the Dam, through which the procession was to enter. It was an imposing procession which preceded the Queen; at her side was Bernhard, and they were followed by the A.D.C.s, the bearers of the royal mantle which they laid round her seat when she sat down. Representatives of the resistance fulfilled important functions at the ceremony. I also remember the kings of arms in their historic costumes who would presently raise their staffs and claim 'the Queen is installed', and the heralds in their medieval attire who would proceed to the exit with the trumpeters and repeat the cry in front of the crowd.

When all were seated, Juliana delivered her speech, to which I listened in breathless tension. I have read it many times since. What she said to me came so directly from the heart that I felt a little less embarrassed and unhappy than I should have done if the words had come from another. This also applied to my appointment as a knight first class of the Military Order of William, which came as a complete surprise. I regard this as a tribute to all my brave fellow-fighters during the war.

The political passages of the speech had my entire approval. The most moving moment came when she took the oath. It was followed by the oath of loyalty to their new Queen from the States-General; the text was read by the president of the First Chamber as president of the combined session, and then taken by all the members. When this was done the procession again preceded Juliana; she left the church and immediately

afterwards appeared on the balcony of the palace with Bernhard and all her children.

After changing into a travelling costume I left unobserved for the Ruygenhoek with Mrs de Beaufort. I continued to follow the events in Amsterdam over the radio. How wonderful, all this enthusiasm for Juliana!

I received a flood of presents, letters and telegrams on my sixty-eighth birthday. All of it undeserved gratitude and kindness; how much of those feelings was represented by the gifts; it was moving.

I also want to recall the first assembly of the World Council of Churches which took place in Amsterdam that year. Juliana attended a meeting as Regent. I did not have to go, and could not have gone for lack of time, but I received a representative of the churches in audience.

I passed some time at the Ruygenhoek and then went to Het Loo where I was festively welcomed by the staff at an intimate party.

When I got into my car in Amsterdam I felt relieved as never before; the tension of the last months was broken, which had been all the stronger because I was responsible for all the arrangements. The fatigue came later, and took months to overcome. I threw myself on my painting. Soon the marvellous colours of autumn returned to tempt me. I also had to furnish my new apartments. Juliana allowed me to go on living at Het Loo, but as my former apartments are the quarters of the Head of State I moved into rooms further down the west wing. Here I have the same beautiful view of the park with its splendour of flowering shrubs, mostly azalea mollis. Juliana suggested that I should continue to paint in my old sitting-room, as I had always done; I accepted gratefully. I had a wonderful home, small and compact, just as I had always wanted, and comfortably warm so long as the winters were not too cold.

Now that I had no more official duties, I wanted to be available to help Juliana whenever she needed me. I visited Soestdijk more regularly, and looked after Marijke when Juliana, Bernhard and the eldest children went to the winter

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sports during the Christmas holidays. The following years Marijke stayed with me at Het Loo, until she was old enough to accompany the others.

I retired completely. I gave up all my committees and patronages to make way for Juliana, who took over from me in many cases. I only remained honorary president of the 'Foundation 1940-1945' and patron of the Artists' Aid Society.

I attended two artists' congresses which were held a short time after. Nearly all other invitations I declined. I did this from conviction, to show that I accepted all the consequences of my abdication and understood my new place in the world; but no less because I wanted to be entirely free, without any obligations.

During the last months before my sixty-eighth birthday I was attracted by the idea of ending my life under the same name with which I had begun when I was a child in my parents' home: Princess Wilhelmina. I decided accordingly.

In late autumn Juliana asked me to represent her in Westkapelle at the symbolic first planting for the new local park, for which she herself, the King of England and I had given shrubs. It was a pleasant, festive day. We were driven round in Zeeland farm carts, it certainly was a unique occasion that found me on a hooded cart together with the British ambassador.

How little we suspected that in 1953 another awful disaster would hit poor Zeeland; that our coast, and not only in Zeeland, would be ravaged by floods which took a heavy toll of human lives and brought untold suffering to many.

8. *Was There Still a Task for Me?*

IT TOOK ME a long time to find inner peace after my abdication. The whole winter of 1949 had passed before I was certain as to whether there was still a task for me, and, if so, what.

Suddenly I was touched by *that* love of all mankind which springs from Christ Himself. Then I saw at once that I should devote my modest forces to working with Him.

'To bring all men to Christ'. My preparation for this task had begun many years ago. Was not my consciousness, in the thirties, that I had become a world citizen in the spiritual sense, a first step?

'To bring all men to Christ', of all nations and all races, as Christ means it in His command to His followers. Not after any pattern of human invention, but in strict execution of His command.

This demands a call to a living faith which can establish a real and personal bond with Christ.

The attempt should be to break out of inner corruption and enslavement to earthly goods, the ties that burden the life of man.

Lonely But Not Alone

There lies a vacuum, a being-without-God, behind the variety of disquieting signs that we observe. The consequence is action without concern for higher Guidance, which causes a spiritual distress that cries to Heaven.

It was in this vacuum that I became aware that Christ set me to work. In spite of all the depressing events we witness around us, Christ has struck at the deepest roots of evil. In the present day, and in our own society. With Him my work stands at the heart of living reality. It is there that He wants us to serve Him.

I took my modest place in the company of those who want the same thing, at a time when the longing for something to fill up the vacuum was growing. All over the world there are people seeking and finding Christ and looking for fraternization and unity in Him, inside as well as outside the churches. This spirit is particularly noticeable in many younger people, and it is always accompanied by a profound desire to apply the teaching of Christ in practice and to achieve a vital Christianity which will understand and dominate the spirit of our time. This creates a greater openness to His Guidance and reduces the influence of the intellectualism, materialism and fatalism of our time.

I addressed myself to people over the radio and in writing, and in several languages. I drew up notes and messages for the use of particular groups and persons.

Always basing myself on the all-embracing unity in Christ, I met many people who were important for my work and had meetings which had a direct bearing on my bond with Him. Many of these contacts were with young people. I also carried on a steadily increasing correspondence with people of many countries in different parts of the world.

Gradually I became aware of the higher Guidance in this field of my existence too. I have come to see it as a small part of the great Plan by which Christ is ceaselessly working, the Plan that is part of His universal Plan for His Creation, and that aims at a better and happier reality for His creatures.

This Guidance has governed my whole person and therefore also my acts in the execution of my new task.

Finally I have been working on this book for some years.

Most important of all is to me the inner relation to Christ. This enabled me, as I pointed out before, to accomplish the task that was mine for nearly fifty years of activity in the midst of my people. What a liberating influence it was in the many difficult moments of my life.

After reading this book, the reader will have an idea of how much time my spiritual growth and development have demanded.

Life at Het Loo, in the midst of God's glorious nature, offers me an unique opportunity to acquire a genuine understanding of all He teaches me. Inner growth and development require peace and cannot be hurried. The further one advances on this road, the better one realizes the ineffable kinship between Christ's essence and the profoundest and most sacred essence of ourselves.

In one of our finest Easter hymns there occurs the line: 'On your word, Life of our life (we cast away the grave-clothes).' In the greatest moments of my existence in later life I felt this life pulsing within me.

If it had been my intention to show Him to the reader as I imagined Him in the years of my human short-sightedness, this would have served little purpose. My aim has been to represent Him as He comes to me and reveals Himself to me. As I said before, He is One and the Same as God the Father, who descended to us as Christ, veiling His glory by assuming human shape, and on the cross and in His resurrection took upon Himself our guilt, thereby reviving the kinship to which I referred above.

It is thus that He presents Himself to me!

I have the same certainty of His death and resurrection on Easter morning, and the same conviction that He lives and gives us eternal life as His disciples who saw His death on the cross and His resurrection. He Himself says: 'Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe,' thereby according equal value to their testimony and that of those who were present at the time.

Lonely But Not Alone

It is often argued that Christianity is only one out of a number of religions and spiritual movements. Christianity however is not a religion in the ordinary sense of the word. While other religions observe a doctrine that governs everything, Christ is simply Himself the Way, the Truth and the Life. He is the fulfilment of the aspirations of other religions; the supreme answer to the profoundest questions.

When the human spirit and human thinking reach their limits, God Himself in Christ comes to the assistance of His creatures and supplies His Divine answer.

The Nicean Creed says: 'God of God, Light of Light . . . of one Substance with the Father, by Whom all things were made.' He tells us: 'I am the Way, the Truth and the Life, no man cometh unto the Father but by Me.' Could a more definite and positive answer be imagined to the questions many ask themselves concerning the 'invisible things' to which the Nicean Creed refers? No room is left for vagueness and hesitation. There is no other possibility but to understand literally *Who* is the Way, the Truth and the Life. It can only mean that there is no way to the Father but by Christ.

This is the fulfilment of life, personally and effectively on the highest plane, beginning on earth and in the present, and continuing in the future life.

Christ taught me to fathom the distress, the despair and the guilt which mankind has brought upon itself by not following His Guidance, as well as the guilt feelings that are often hidden in the subconscious. As I said before, He awoke me to a sympathetic understanding of that nameless suffering. He kindled in me the desire to be used to alleviate it, a desire which fills my heart and mind.

What have I not seen in the course of my long life? Let me point out that it was given to me to appreciate the progress I could observe in various fields; in spite of its shortcomings, society can boast of progress and development. The discoveries made by the human mind brought about a technical revolution. If these discoveries had always been put to the right purpose, if they had been applied in accordance with

God's intention: for the true well-being of mankind; a happy and prosperous era would have begun.

Having pointed this out, I must ask the reader to consider the troubled times in which my story is set. At first I lived in the civilization and superficial calm of the years before the First World War, with all its standards of decency which, however, soon proved to be hollow. When the hordes of the aggressor overran the neighbouring countries and their peaceful inhabitants, I read reports of rude violence and brutality, and *la bête humaine* appeared.

The four years' struggle, the shocks the nations had received, the changed conditions both for those who had taken part in the war and for the neutrals, made a return to pre-war civilization quite impossible. Already in its death-throes it lacked the resilience to impose itself anew and the force to create a genuine peace. The soil from which it had sprung lay fallow, and everyone could sow on it what he considered suitable.

We have all seen and suffered the consequences of this situation. Evil flourished where the standards of the earlier civilization had collapsed. New ideologies expanded rapidly, accompanied by violence and ruthless cruelty. In short, the beast in man had his chance and soon began to use the new ideas and discoveries to further his own ends! Unrestrained self-interest took its course. Moral standards were slipping everywhere. Unfortunately the general public soon got used to this state of affairs and, what was worse, resigned itself to it. Timely measures to reduce the power of evil or at least to check its progress were neglected.

On this well-prepared soil the Second World War broke out. At first Adolf Hitler's insatiable hunger for conquest was satisfied relatively easily by unsuspecting peoples who had never dreamed of practices such as his. He could gain a considerable advantage because they had not equipped themselves against him. They could only react by dumb astonishment and consternation.

But I shall be brief about this. My argument is concerned with evil in general and with the extent of its spread in those terrible years.

Lonely But Not Alone

When a little lump of snow comes loose near the top of a mountain, it grows into an avalanche, which carries everything before it in its mad course until it ends down in the valley with a thundering roar. It is the same with evil, for one evil produces the next and so it goes on, faster and faster, into the abyss.

This is the image of the guilt man has brought upon himself and of the abyss into which he has fallen. Little wonder that when he begins to realize this, man asks himself: how will I ever extricate myself? That he begins to doubt and to despair of himself and of everything and everybody and even, worst of all perhaps, of the future of mankind. That human existence seems useless to him.

Under the torture of the black night of the soul, he imagines himself lost for ever.

Christ raised me above all this and made me aware of God's reality. He showed me that in spite of everything man remains the child of God, through the redeeming power of Christ, whose love transforms the darkness of desolation into the light of the sons of God.

Wherever your eyes wander, or your thoughts, you are and you breathe in a universe governed by the wisdom and the patience which spring from that Love. You find the radiation of His being everywhere. How could you fail to experience an unspeakable joy at this thought, together with a boundless delight in the greatness of this infinite creation?

Thus is our Christian faith, *this* is Christ's message for all men! *That* is what we preach, *that* is the secret of our spiritual strength, which we must express in deeds great and small, every day.

Look up to the heavens like Abraham, to the shining army of the stars, with all the life He has created on them. Look through the latest most powerful telescope, as far as its lens will allow, and realize that this image is repeated outside the field of our vision, an infinite number of times, so that we cannot even suspect the extent of God's creation, and think that He who redeems you and all mankind on the cross, is

the One 'to Whom all power has been given in heaven and on earth'.

Reader, the foregoing is addressed to each of us personally, and confronts us all with the question of whether we are prepared to accept the salvation that Christ offers and to comply with God's Fatherly order.

Are you prepared to solve all problems without exception in the spirit of Christ? To join hands in order to put an end to abuses, to poverty, hunger, crime and the refugee problem, wherever they may occur? And by acting thus, to transform uncertainty and despondency into confidence, hope and the certainty of faith?

Or do you choose to follow your own ambitions, and in your short-sightedness to tread paths and make plans which are incompatible with God's ordinance? After having caused great harm to individuals and the community, these will prove to be castles in the air; and, worse, they will perpetuate the imprisonment of our time under the powers of darkness.

The present and the future will have to show if there is such a preparedness.

We must not forget to see the present as the road to what *will be one day*, to what was promised in the words 'He will be all in all'. To see the postponement of this day in the true Light of His Love and His patient waiting, in order to give to all until the very last a full chance of coming out of darkness into His miraculous Light.

Reader, before I lay down my pen I want to let you know that what I said in this last chapter came as a revelation in my own life.

Now I consider my duty accomplished, which was to show you how everything in my life was guided and had its significance in Christ's supreme plan. This is not to say that an end has come to the Guidance that governs my life, which goes on without interruption, like my task. And when Christ calls me to Him, the latter will accompany me into the new life that awaits me.

Lonely But Not Alone

I pray that Christ's joy may come to all His creatures and that their joy be fulfilled in Him.

He stands at the door of the heart and knocks. If mankind hears His voice and opens the door, He will enter.

WILHELMINA
PRINCESS OF THE NETHERLANDS



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